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SUPERMAN'S ROMANCE WITH WONDER WOMAN!
SUPERMAN'S STALEMATE WITH LEX LUTHOR!
SUPERMAN'S PALS LOIS LANE AND JIMMY OLSEN!
ZEEEEZEEEE
SUPERMAN'S CONFLICT WITH THE MAN-BAT!
COMMEMORATING SUPERMAN'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY 1938~1988
FIFTY YEARS
Featuring work by ANDERSON, BEATTY, GIORDANO, MAGUIRE, MIGNOLA, ORDWAY, RUDE, SCHAFFENBERGER, SIMONSON, STERN, SWAN, and ZECK!

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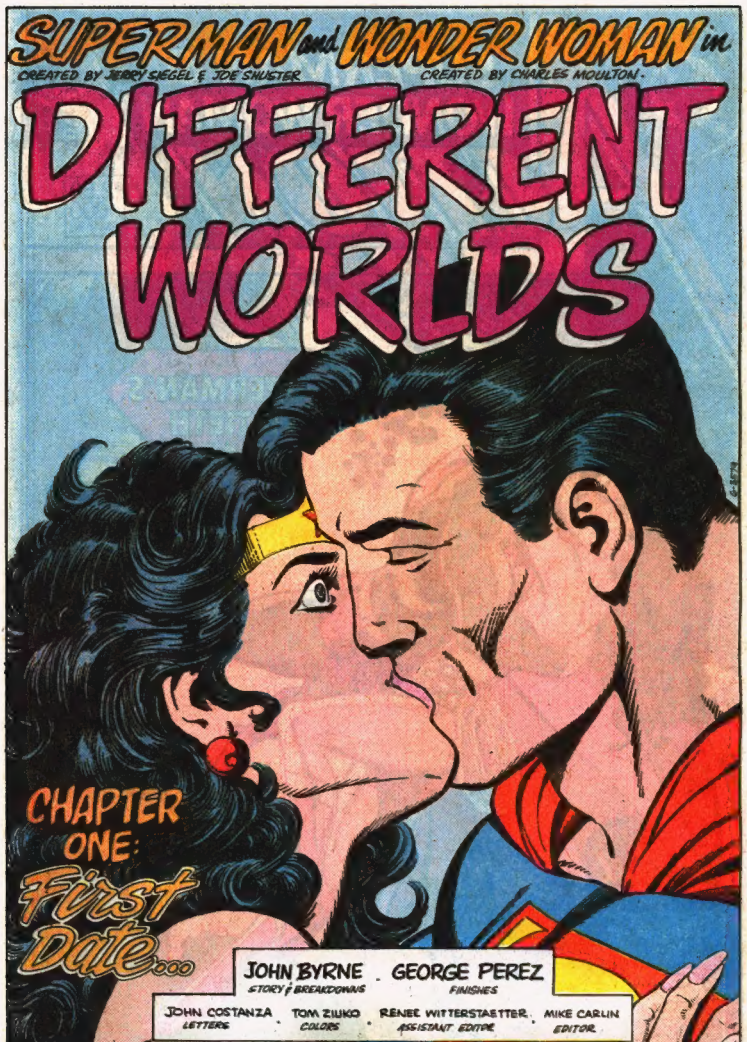
FIFTY YEARS



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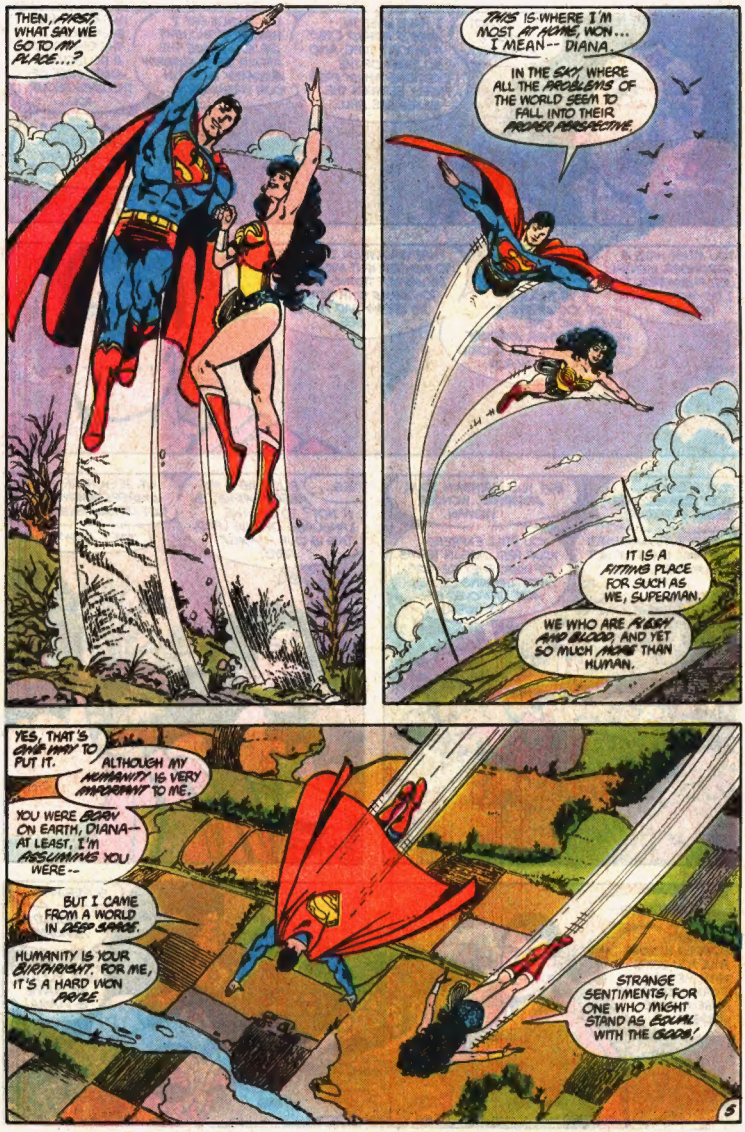
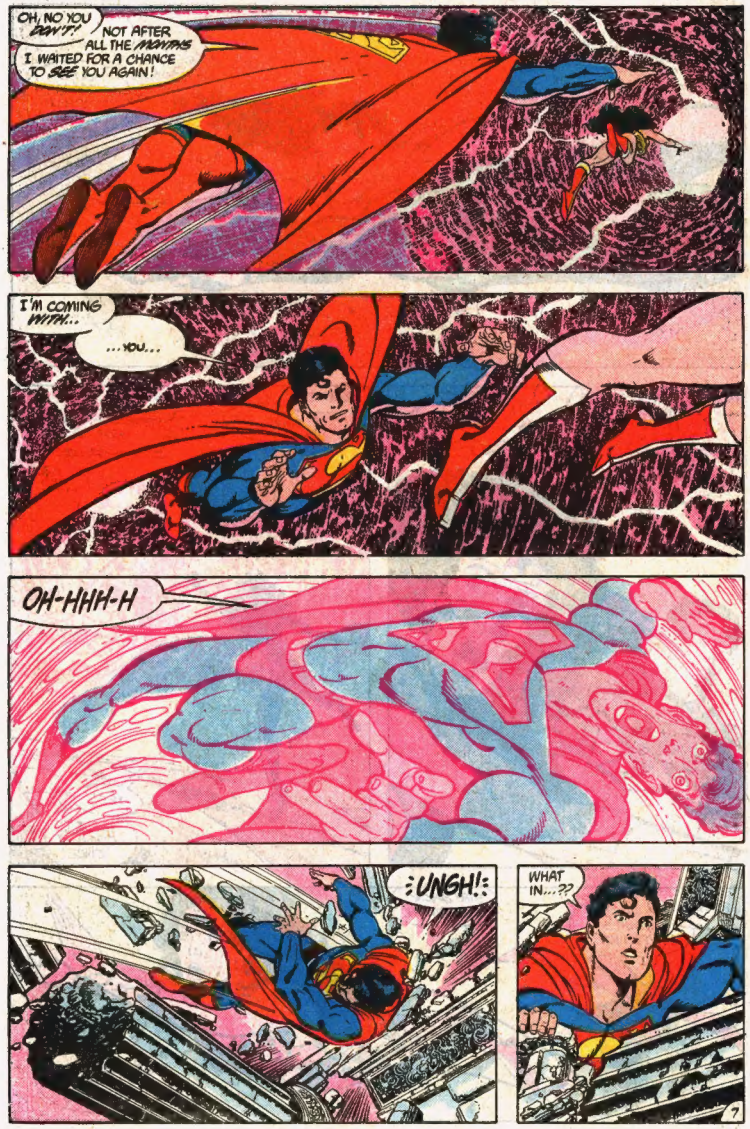
...ER...
S-SORRY...
I... GUESS THAT WAS OUT OF LINE...
2

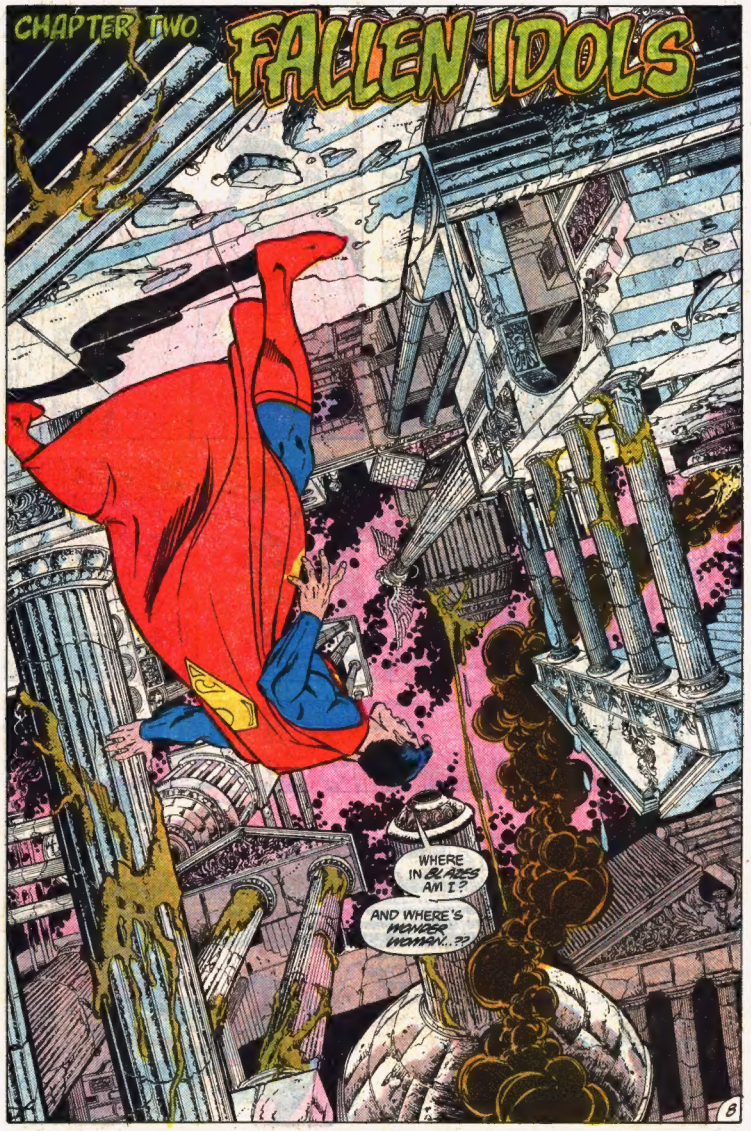
SOMEWHAT.
I... DID NOT EXPECT QUITE SUCH A... PASSIONATE RECEPTION, SUPERMAN.
I GUESS NOT.
SORRY AGAIN, WONDER WOMAN. I FREELY ADMIT I'M NOT ALL THAT GOOD AT THIS SORT OF THING...
"THIS SORT OF THING...?"
ER...
WELL... I SUPPOSE THAT JUST PROVES MY POINT, DOESN'T IT? YOU'VE BEEN ON MY MIND AN AWFUL LOT, SINCE WE MET IN WASHINGTON...
I'M... AFRAID I JUST DELUDED MYSELF INTO THINKING YOU WERE... WELL...
... THAT I WAS ON YOUR MIND A LOT, TOO.
SORRY.
THAT IS THE THIRD TIME YOU HAVE SAID "SORRY," SUPERMAN. ONCE WAS MORE THAN SUFFICIENT.
I AM... NOT WITHOUT REGRETS. I WILL NOT SAY YOU HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY ABSENT FROM MY THOUGHTS IN THESE MONTHS PAST.
IN FACT, I HAVE A FRIEND IN BOSTON WHO IS PERCEPTIVE ENOUGH TO HAVE READ MUCH INTO MY SILENCE ON THE SUBJECT OF YOU...
THEN...
THEN THERE'S A CHANCE THE FEELINGS I HAVE WHIRLING ABOUT INSIDE MY BARIN...
... MIGHT BE RECIPROCATED...?
3

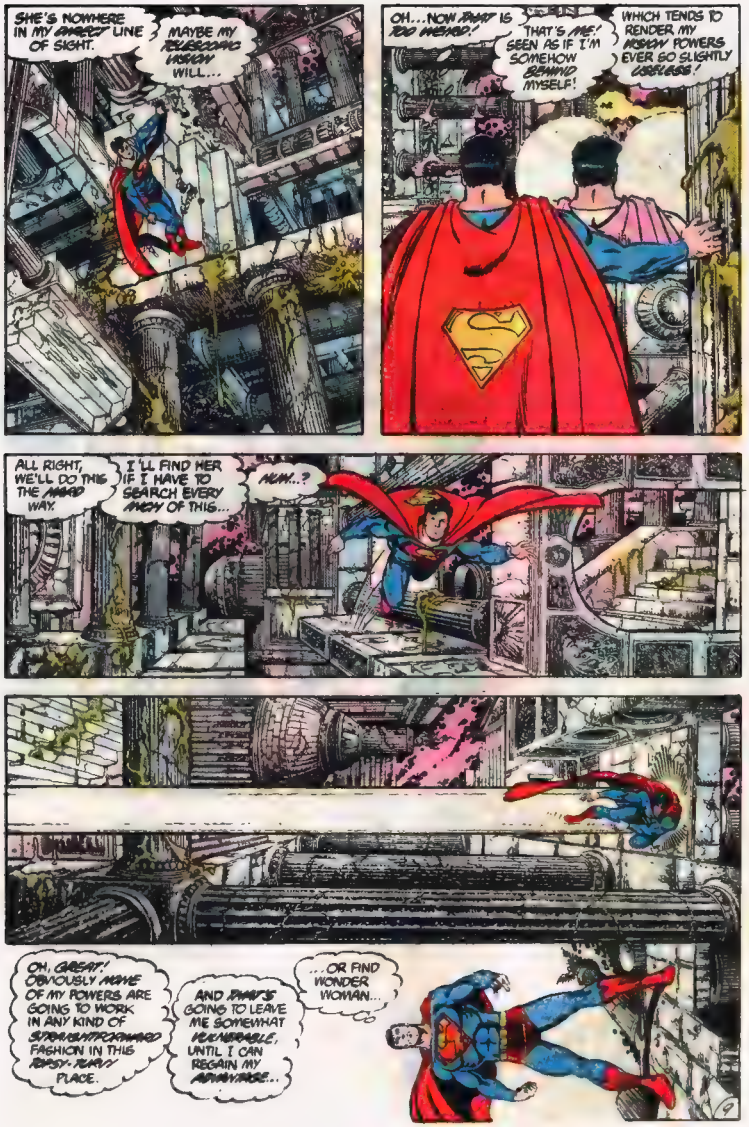
I... DO NOT KNOW SUPERMAN.
I HAVE LIVED IN MAN'S WORLD ONLY A SHORT TIME, AND SO MANY OF THE EMOTIONS WHICH PASS FREELY BETWEEN THE SEXES ARE STILL...
I WILL NOT SAY I HAVE NOT THOUGHT OF YOU SINCE THE AFFAIR OF G. GORDON GODFREY ENDED IN YOUR WASHINGTON...
IN FACT, IT HAS BEEN MORE IN THE FASHION OF A DELIBERATE AVOIDANCE OF THOUGHTS ABOUT YOU...
IN MANY WAYS A GREATER STRAIN THAN FACING ANY FEELINGS OUTRIGHT.
YOU MUST HAVE A STRONGER MENTAL SELF-CONTROL THAN I DO, WONDER WOMAN.
I'VE THOUGHT OF YOU OFTEN. I EVEN HAD ONE... WELL, A RATHER INTENSE DREAM ABOUT YOU, SHORTLY AFTER WASHINGTON.
THAT WAS WHEN I STARTED TO WONDER IF IT MIGHT NOT BE MY HEART TRYING TO COME TO TERMS WITH SOMETHING MY BRAIN HAD YET TO SEE...
YOU SPEAK IN MOST COMPELLING TERMS, SUPERMAN.
I HAVE A MODDICK'S HEART, BUT I AM NOT UNMOVED BY YOUR WORDS.
BUT YOU MAINTAIN YOUR DISTANCE, WONDER WOMAN.
YOU STILL EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS IN TERMS OF WHAT THEY'RE NOT-- NOT THINKING OF ME, NOT UNMOVED BY MY WORDS...
YES... BUT THIS IS MY PREROGATIVE, IS IT NOT? TO USE THE LANGUAGE OF THIS LAND. THIS IS OUR... FIRST DATE.
WE SEEK HERE UNDERSTANDINGS, NOT CONSUMMATION.
AM I RIGHT?
YES.
ABSOLUTELY.
ALL RIGHT, WONDER WOMAN, WILL YOU COME WITH ME NOW, SO I CAN INTRODUCE MYSELF MORE PROPERLY?
SUPERMAN...
I WOULD BE HONORED..
BUT, PLEASE, MY NAME IS DIANA!
9

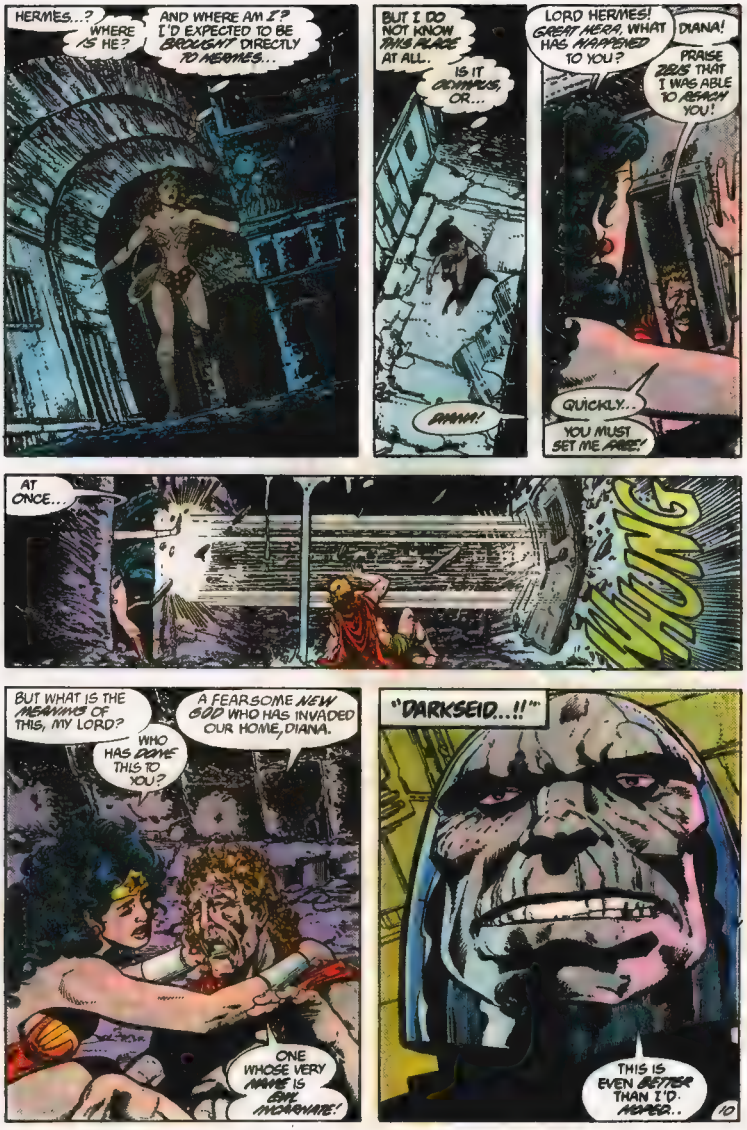

THEN, FIRST, WHAT SAY WE GO TO MY PLACE...?
THIS IS WHERE I'M MOST AT HOME, WON... I MEAN-- DIANA.
IN THE SKY, WHERE ALL THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD SEEM TO FALL INTO THEIR PROPER PERSPECTIVE.
IT IS A FITTING PLACE FOR SUCH AS WE, SUPERMAN.
WE WHO ARE PART BODY AND BLOOD, AND YET SO MUCH MORE THAN HUMAN.
YES, THAT'S ONE WAY TO PUT IT.
ALTHOUGH MY HUMANITY IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME.
YOU WERE BORN ON EARTH, DIANA-- AT LEAST, I'M ASSUMING YOU WERE--
BUT I CAME FROM A WORLD IN DEEP SPACE.
HUMANITY IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT. FOR ME, IT'S A HARD WON PRIZE.
STRANGE SENTIMENTS, FOR ONE WHO MIGHT STAND AS EQUAL WITH THE GODS!
5

THE GODS...?
WELL, IT'S TRUE. I SUPPOSE, THAT I'VE ACCEPTED MANY OF THE REASONS/BLESSINGS OF GODHOOD...
BUT WITH PRECIOUS FEW OF THE ASKS, I'M AFRAID.
YOU... UNDERRATE YOURSELF, SURELY..?
NO.
I CAN DO THINGS NO MORTAL CAN, PRINCESS, BUT FOR ALL THAT... WELL, AT HEART I'M JUST A BOY FROM A SMALL TOWN IN KANSAS..
...DIANA...
HERMES!
WHAT...?!?
...DIANA...
...HELP ME...
YES!
YES, I'LL COME AT ONCE!
DIANA...?
WAIT! WHAT'S HAPPENING??
STAY BACK, SUPERMAN.
I AM SUMMONED TO REALMS BEYOND HUMAN KEN!
6

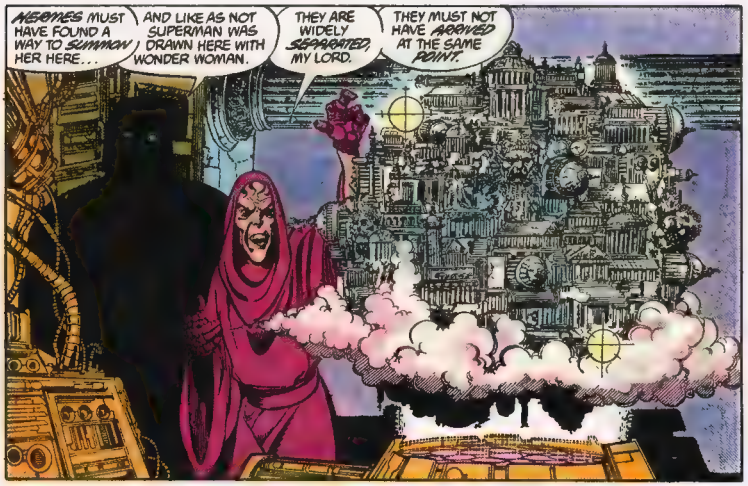

OH, NO YOU DON'T!
NOT AFTER ALL THE MONTHS I WAITED FOR A CHANCE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
I'M COMING WITH...
...YOU...
OH-HHH-H
:UNGH!:
WHAT IN...??

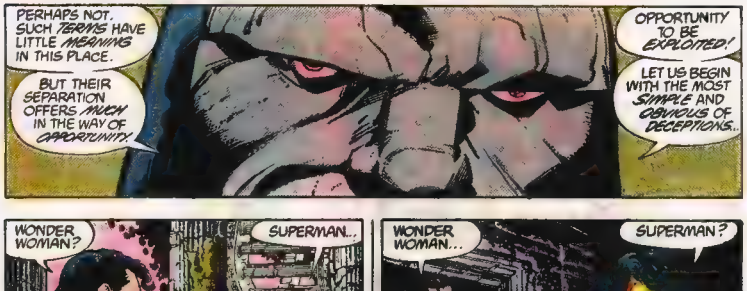

CHAPTER TWO
FALLEN IDOLS
WHERE IN BLAZES AM I?
AND WHERE'S WONDER WOMAN...??
8


SHE'S NOWHERE IN MY DIRECT LINE OF SIGHT.
MAYBE MY TELESCOPIC VISION WILL...
OH...NOW THAT IS TOO WEIRD!
THAT'S ME! SEEN AS IF I'M SOMEHOW BEHIND MYSELF!
WHICH TENDS TO RENDER MY MOSAIC POWERS EVER SO SLIGHTLY USELESS!
ALL RIGHT, WE'LL DO THIS THE HARD WAY.
I'LL FIND HER IF I HAVE TO SEARCH EVERY INCH OF THIS...
HUH...?
OH, GREAT! OBVIOUSLY NONE OF MY POWERS ARE GOING TO WORK IN ANY KIND OF STRAIGHTFORWARD FASHION IN THIS JUNGLE-LIKE PLACE.
AND THAT'S GOING TO LEAVE ME SOMEWHAT VULNERABLE, UNTIL I CAN REGAIN MY ADVANTAGE...
...OR FIND WONDER WOMAN...
9

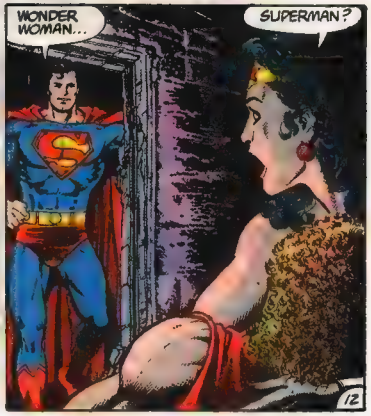

HERMES...?
WHERE IS HE?
AND WHERE AM I? I'D EXPECTED TO BE BROUGHT DIRECTLY TO HERMES...
BUT I DO NOT KNOW THIS PLACE AT ALL..
IS IT OLYMPUS, OR...
AHAH!
LORD HERMES! GREAT HERA, WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?
DIANA!
PRAISE ZEUS THAT I WAS ABLE TO REACH YOU!
QUICKLY..
YOU MUST SET ME FREE!
AT ONCE...
KONG
BUT WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, MY LORD?
WHO HAS DONE THIS TO YOU?
A FEARSOME NEW GOD WHO HAS INVADED OUR HOME, DIANA.
ONE WHOSE VERY NAME IS EVIL INCARNATE!
"DARKSEID...!!"
THIS IS EVEN BETTER THAN I'D HOPED..
10

MY CONQUEST OF OLYMPUS HAS NETTED ME MORE THAN THE HOME OF OUR FELLOW GODS...
IT HAS BROUGHT ME SUPERMAN!!
AND MORE STILL, GREAT DARKSEID.
BEHOLD! EVEN NOW, IN THE CELL OF THE CAPTURED MESSENGER...
A FEMALE ..?
NO! NOT JUST A FEMALE! ANOTHER OF THOSE WHO STOOD AGAINST ME WHEN I SCHEMED TO DESTROY ALL EARTHLY LEGENDS.
WONDER WOMAN!!!

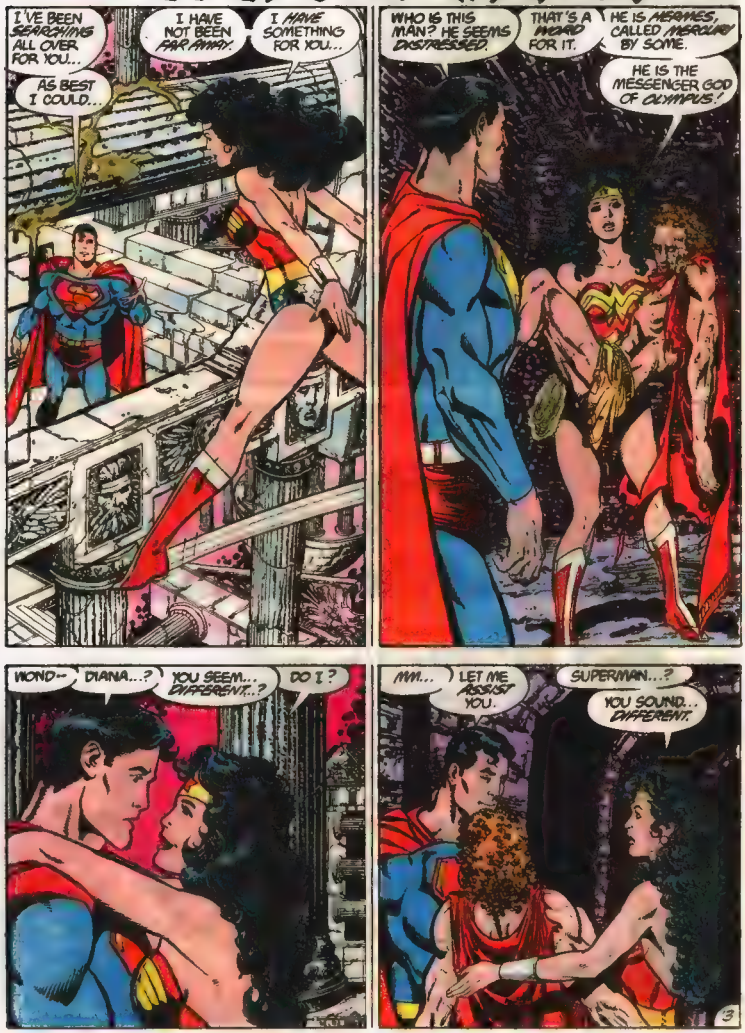

NEMESES MUST HAVE FOUND A WAY TO SUMMON HER HERE...
AND LIKE AS NOT SUPERMAN WAS DRAWN HERE WITH WONDER WOMAN.
THEY ARE WIDELY SEPARATED, MY LORD.
THEY MUST NOT HAVE ARRIVED AT THE SAME POINT.


PERHAPS NOT. SUCH TERRYS HAVE LITTLE MEANING IN THIS PLACE.
BUT THEIR SEPARATION OFFERS MUCH IN THE WAY OF OPPORTUNITY.
OPPORTUNITY TO BE EXPLOITED!
LET US BEGIN WITH THE MOST SIMPLE AND OBVIOUS OF DECEPTIONS.

WONDER WOMAN?
SUPERMAN...

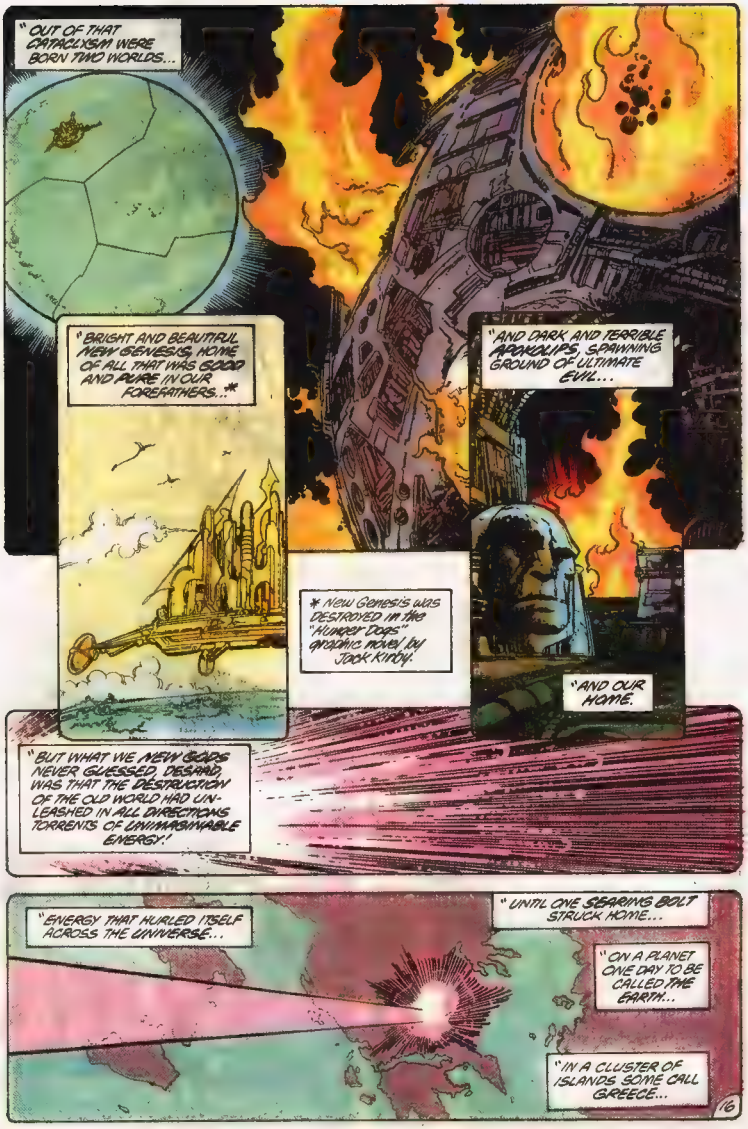

WONDER WOMAN...
SUPERMAN?

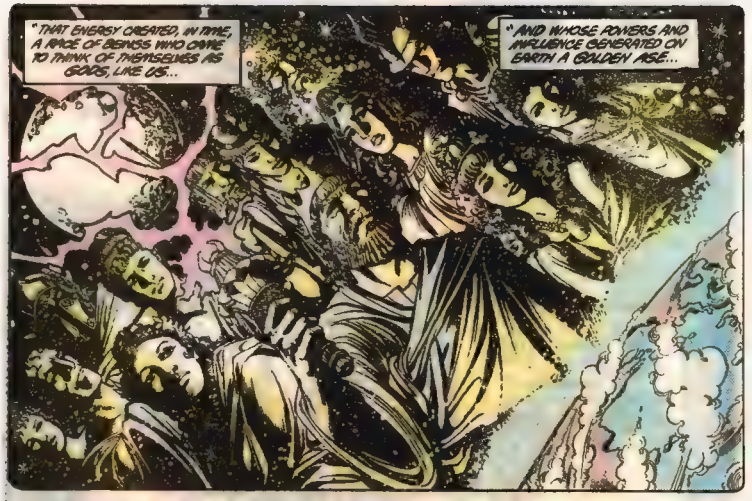
CHAPTER THREE: BROKEN-MIRRORS

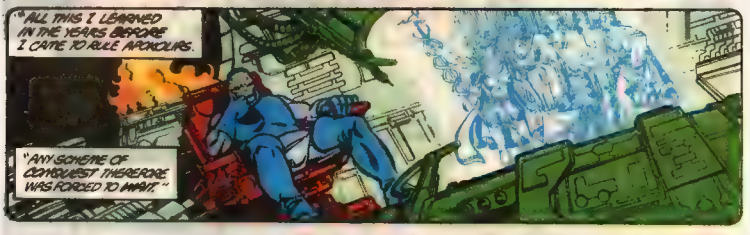


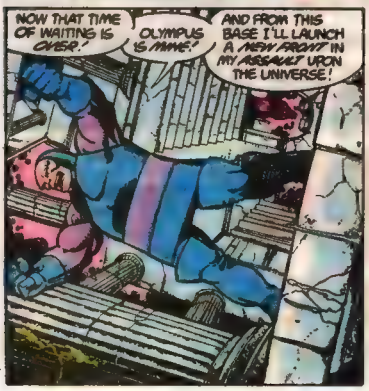
ER... WELL... YES, I MEAN, BEFORE... ON EARTH...
AND DOES THIS CHANGE NOT PLEASE YOU, SUPERMAN?
AM I NOT NOW EVERYTHING A MAN COULD DESIRE?
DO I, WONDER WOMAN?
YES... I SUPPOSE I DO.
AND, OF COURSE, THERE IS A REASON...
EVERYTHING YOU DESIRE?
I AM DIFFERENT!"
:UNGH!:
WHOM!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
DO YOU APPRECIATE THE DELICIOUS IRONY OF THE SITUATION, DESAAD?
DO YOU SEE HOW MY CONSTRUCTS PLAY OFF THE INNER WEAKNESSES OF EACH OF OUR UNSUSPECTING GUESTS?
YES, GREAT DARKSEID.
BUT... IS THIS NOT DANGEROUS, MY LORD?
THUS FAR OUR... YEAR CONQUEST OF OLYMPUS HAS BEEN WITHOUT FLAW.
SHOULD THESE IMPEDIMENTS NOT BE SUMMARILY DESTROYED RATHER THAN TOYED WITH?
STRANGE SENTIMENTS, FROM YOU, DESAAD.
YOU, WHOSE WHOLE EXISTENCE IS DEDICATED TO CRUELTY AND SUFFERING.
BUT FRET NOT, DESAAD. I HAVE WAITED TOO LONG TO LET THIS SMALL DIVERSION DISRUPT MY MASTER PLAN.
WAITED ALL THESE CENTURIES SINCE FIRST I LEARNED THE TRUTH ABOUT OLYMPUS.
"REMEMBER, DESAAD?
"REMEMBER THE GREAT LEGENDS OF HOW THE WORLD OF THE FIRST GODS, THE OLD GODS, DIED?
"SPLIT ASUNDER BY THE FURY OF THEIR FINAL RAGNAROK...
5


"OUT OF THAT CATACLYSM WERE BORN TWO WORLDS...
"BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL NEW GENESIS, HOME OF ALL THAT WAS GOOD AND PURE IN OUR FOREFATHERS..."*
"AND DARK AND TERRIBLE APOKOLIPS, SPAWNING GROUND OF ULTIMATE EVIL...
"AND OUR HOME.
* New Genesis was DESTROYED in the "Hunger Dogs" graphic novel by Jack Kirby!
"BUT WHAT WE NEW GODS NEVER GUESSED, DESAAD, WAS THAT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OLD WORLD HAD UNLEASHED IN ALL DIRECTIONS TORRENTS OF UNIMAGINABLE ENERGY!"
"ENERGY THAT HURLED ITSELF ACROSS THE UNIVERSE...
"UNTIL ONE SEARING BOLT STRUCK HOME...
"ON A PLANET ONE DAY TO BE CALLED THE EARTH...
"IN A CLUSTER OF ISLANDS SOME CALL GREECE...
16

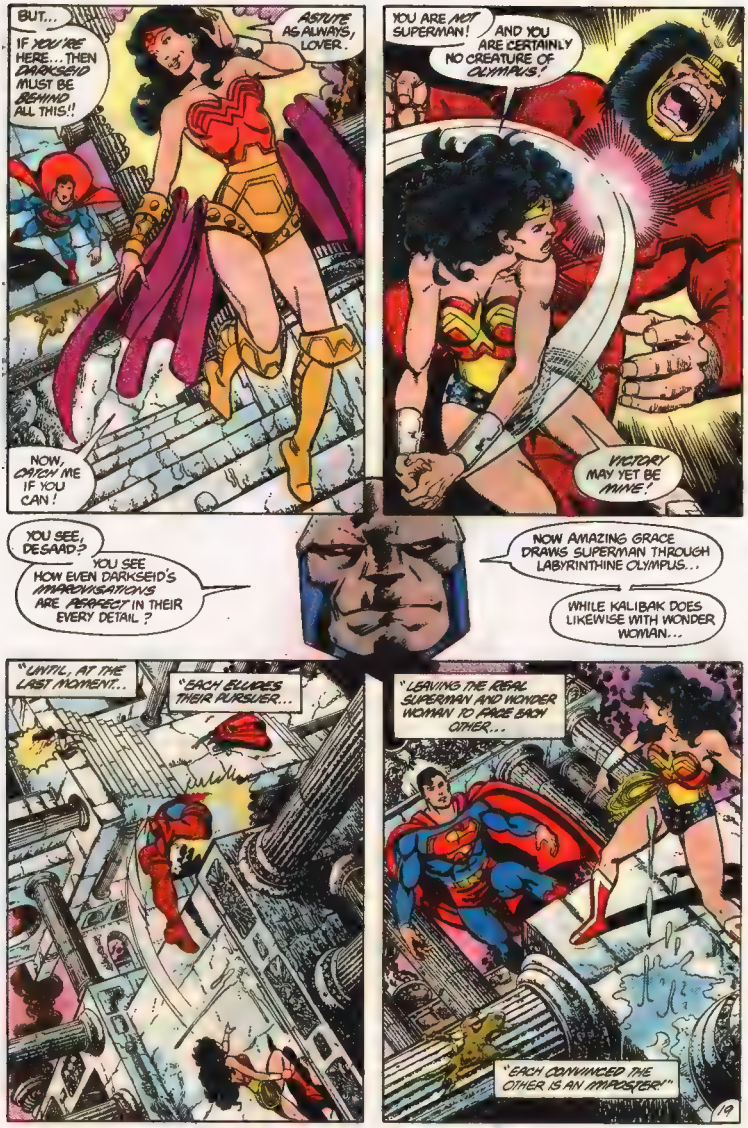

"THAT ENERGY CREATED, IN TIME, A RACE OF BEINGS WHO CAME TO THINK OF THEMSELVES AS GODS, LIKE US...
"AND WHOSE POWERS AND INFLUENCE GENERATED ON EARTH A GOLDEN AGE..


"ALL THIS I LEARNED IN THE YEARS BEFORE I CAME TO RULE APOKOLIPS.
"ANY SCHEME OF CONQUEST THEREFORE WAS FORCED TO WAIT."


NOW THAT TIME OF WAITING IS OVER!
OLYMPUS IS MINE!
AND FROM THIS BASE I'LL LAUNCH A NEW FRONT IN MY ASSAULT UPON THE UNIVERSE!

AND SOON, JUST AS MY NEW WAND HOLDS MASTERY IN DARK APOKOLIPS...
...SO SHALL ALL THE WORLDS OF TIME AND SPACE BE MINE!
MINE!!

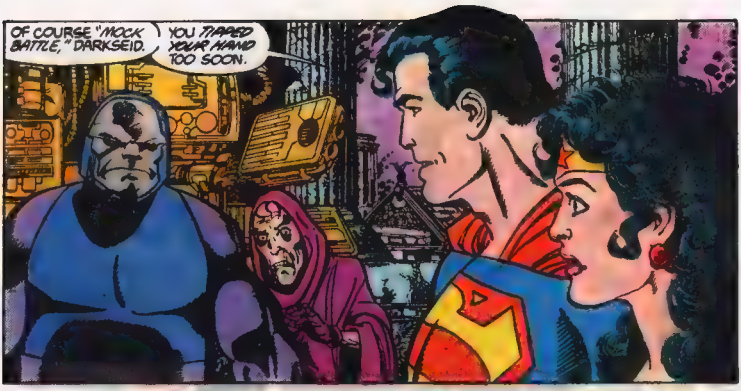
BUT, LORD DARKSEID...
WHAT OF SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN?
YOUR ATTENTION HAS STRAYED FROM THEM...
UNTRUE.
NOTHING ESCAPES MY ATTENTION, DESAAD, HOWEVER DISTRACTED I MIGHT APPEAR.
IN FACT, THE TIME HAS COME TO FURTHER TWIST THE GAME I PLAY WITH THEM...
"I SEE SUPERMAN, WHO FINDS IN THIS ROMANTIC WONDER WOMAN ALL HIS FANTASIES FULFILLED..
"HOW WILL HE REACT WHEN I REVEAL HER NOW TO HOLD ANOTHER, FROM ENTIRELY..?
AMAZING GRACE...??
THEN YOU REMEMBER ME, BELOVED?
I AM PLEASED..
"AND WONDER WOMAN, WHO THINKS HERSELF IN HOPELESS BATTLE WITH A BEING SHE BELIEVES A DEMI-GOD...
"LET HER NOW LOOK UPON HIS TRUE FACE...
"KALIBAK, THE DESTROYER!!"
18


BUT...
IF YOU ARE HERE... THEN DARKSEID MUST BE BEHIND ALL THIS!!
ASTUTE AS ALWAYS, LOVER.
NOW, CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!
YOU ARE NOT SUPERMAN!
AND YOU ARE CERTAINLY NO CREATURE OF OLYMPUS!
VICTORY MAY YET BE MINE!
YOU SEE, DESAAD?
YOU SEE HOW EVEN DARKSEID'S IMPROVISATIONS ARE PERFECT IN THEIR EVERY DETAIL?
NOW AMAZING GRACE DRAWS SUPERMAN THROUGH LABYRINTHINE OLYMPUS...
WHILE KALIBAK DOES LIKEWISE WITH WONDER WOMAN...
"UNTIL, AT THE LAST MOMENT..
"EACH ELUDES THEIR PURSUER...
"LEAVING THE REAL SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN TO FACE EACH OTHER...
"EACH CONVINCED THE OTHER IS AN IMPOSTER!"

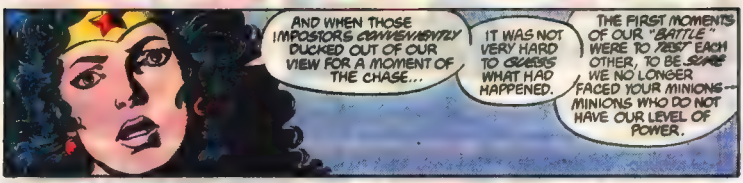
INTERLUDE:
BOSTON...
BOSS!
YOU CAN'T DO THIS!!
CHARISSE... WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME...
BUT I DON'T RECALL ANYTHING IN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION THAT SAYS YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT I CAN OR CANNOT DO!
BUT... BUT, MINDY, COME ON!!
P.R. IS ONE THING, BUT THIS?
THIS IS... WELL, IT'S JUST A FLAT OUT LIE!!
IS IT?
ONE MAN'S LIE IS ANOTHER MAN'S PUBLICITY SENSATION, SWEETIE!
BESIDES, WHO'S TO SAY IT'S REALLY A LIE? SUPERMAN AND DIANA AGREED TO MEET... IN PRIVATE... SOMEWHERE OUT IN THE BOONIES...
WHERE NO ONE CAN SEE... NO ONE CAN HEAR...
IT DOESN'T TAKE EINSTEIN TO PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER ON THAT ONE!
SUPERMAN & WONDER WOMAN
THE ROMANCE OF THE CENTURY
20

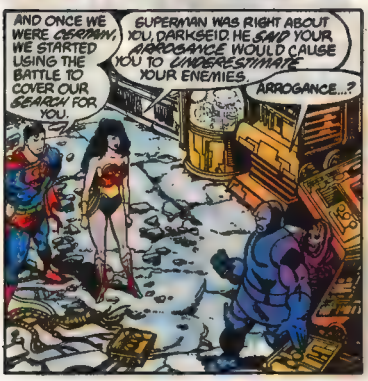
CHAPTER FOUR
BATTLE!
AND NOW THE PERFECT CULMINATION!
NOW THESE GREATEST HEROES OF THE PLANET EARTH ARE SET AGAINST EACH OTHER...
...AND BEFORE THIS DAY'S LAST HOUR HAS TOLLED...
SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN WILL BE NO MORE!!!

CHAPTER FIVE...
THIS HOLLOW VICTORY...
WELL WELL! LOOKS LIKE IT WORKED, DIANA!
YES, SUPERMAN. OUR MOCK BATTLE HAS BROUGHT US RIGHT TO DARKSEID'S LAIR!
M-MASTER!
T-TELL ME THIS IS PART OF YOUR PLAN...!!
MOCK BATTLE...?!?
25


OF COURSE "MOCK BATTLE," DARKSEID.
YOU TRAPPED YOUR HAND TOO SOON.

WONDER WOMAN AND I MAY BE MERE MORTALS, DARKSEID...
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE IDIOTS.
AS SOON AS WE SAW WHO THE IMPOSTORS WERE WE KNEW YOU WERE HERE, BEHIND THE SCENES.


AND WHEN THOSE IMPOSTORS CONVENIENTLY DUCKED OUT OF OUR VIEW FOR A MOMENT OF THE CHASE...
IT WAS NOT VERY HARD TO GUESS WHAT HAD HAPPENED.
THE FIRST MOMENTS OF OUR "BATTLE" WERE TO "TEST" EACH OTHER, TO BE SURE WE NO LONGER FACED YOUR MINIONS--MINIONS WHO DO NOT HAVE OUR LEVEL OF POWER.


AND ONCE WE WERE CERTAIN, WE STARTED USING THE BATTLE TO COVER OUR SEARCH FOR YOU.
SUPERMAN WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU, DARKSEID. HE SAID YOUR ARROGANCE WOULD CAUSE YOU TO UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ENEMIES.
ARROGANCE...?

YOU DARE SPEAK OF ARROGANCE TO A GOD!?!
I HAVE CAPTURED OLYMPUS, WONDER WOMAN. IT IS MINE TO DO WITH AS I PLEASE!!
AND I PLEASE TO TURN IT INTO A PLACE AS BLACK AND EVIL AS MY OWN APOKOLIPS!

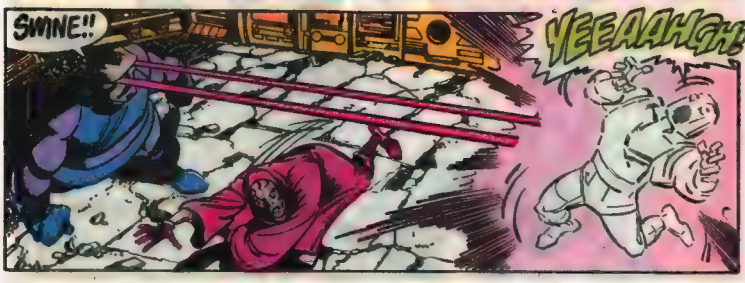
BUT WHY, LORD DARKSEID?
IT WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING!
WHA-AT??
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, FEMALE?

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU COULD HAVE TAKEN THIS LOFTY GROUND SO EASILY IF THE GODS HAD CHOSEN TO STAND AGAINST YOU?

LOOK AROUND YOU! THERE ARE NO GODS HERE, DARKSEID. ONLY YOUR LACKEYS.
THE OLYMPUS YOU HAVE CAPTURED IS DESERTED.. EMPTY!!!

TO PARAPHRASE SHAKESPEARE, DARKSEID...
"...YOU'VE SEIZED A PIECE OF GROUND THAT HATH NO VALUE IN IT BUT THE NAME."
NOOOO!!
THE GODS ARE AWARE! THEIR PRESENCE PERMEATES THIS PLACE!
BUT THEY ARE HIDING FROM ME! HIDING FROM MY WRATH!
EVEN NOW MY MADDEMONS SCOUR EVERY CRANNY OF THIS MARBLE TOMB!
NO STONE IS LEFT UNTURNED, NO DOOR UNOPENED!
THE GODS WILL SOON BE ROOTED OUT...
AND THEN ENSLAVED!!
M-MASTER...

WHAT?
TH-THEY ARE ALRIGHT, M-MASTER!
THIS PARADEMON CAPTAIN HAS JUST CONFIRMED IT.
THE GODS ARE NOT HERE!

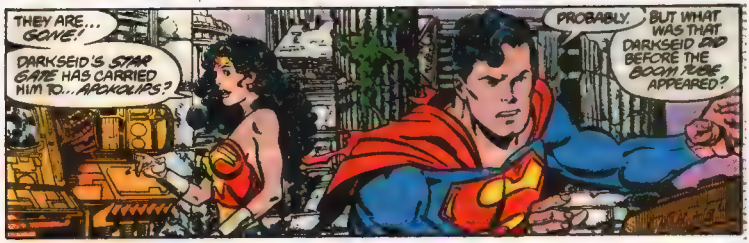

SHINE!!
YEEAAHGH!

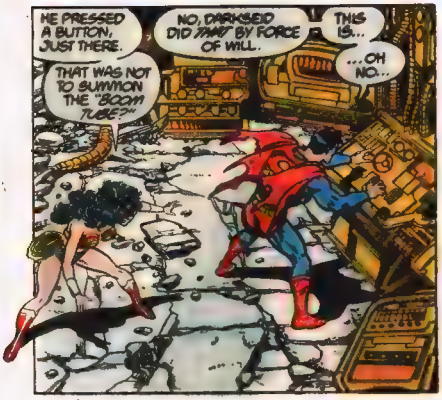
IT SERVES NO END TO PUNISH YOUR UNDERLINGS FOR YOUR OWN FOLLY, DARKSEID.
YOU MUST SEE THE FUTILITY OF ALL THIS. EVEN YOU WOULD NOT INSIST WE CONTINUE OUR BATTLE NOW?
OVER NOTHING?
NO.
YOUR DEATHS WOULD HAVE NO MEANING NOW. NO POINT.
AND THE ACTIONS OF DARKSEID ARE NEVER WITHOUT A POINT...

...IF SOMETIMES THEY MIGHT BE APT?...
CLIC

AND NOW...
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

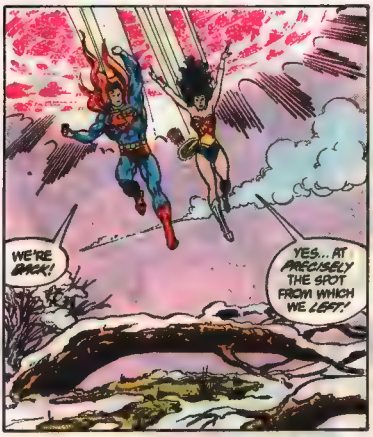
BOOM


THEY ARE... GONE!
DARKSEID'S STAR GATE HAS CARRIED HIM TO... APOKOLIPS?
PROBABLY.
BUT WHAT WAS THAT DARKSEID DID BEFORE THE BOOM TUBE APPEARED?


HE PRESSED A BUTTON, JUST THERE.
NO, DARKSEID DID THAT BY FORCE OF WILL.
THIS IS...
...OH NO...
THAT WAS NOT TO SUMMON THE "BOOM TUBE?"

WONDER WOMAN...
MY X-RAY VISION REVEALS THAT DARKSEID HAS HAD BOOM-TUBES PLANTED THROUGH-OUT OLYMPUS!
THEY'RE GOING TO BOOM AT ANY SECOND! WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE-- BUT HOW?
OLYMPUS IS DOOMED!
FRET NOT, SUPERMAN.

HERMES! WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE? YOU SHOULD HAVE FLED WHILE YOU HAD THE CHANCE!
THERE IS NO NEED FOR FLIGHT, PRINCESS...
WHAT IN...??
I SAW THE EXPLOSION. I HEARD IT. BUT I DIDN'T FEEL ANYTHING...?
I UNDERSTAND NOW, SUPERMAN.
OLYMPUS IS ETERNAL. NOT EVEN DARKSEID CAN DESTROY IT.
IT WILL ARISE ONLY WHEN THE GODS THEMSELVES WISH IT TO BE SO...

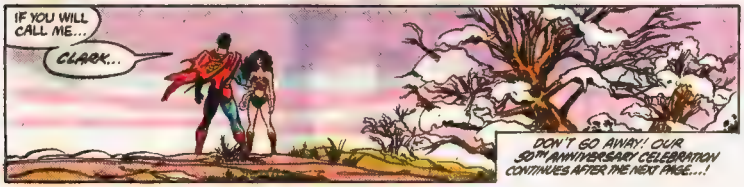

WE'RE BACK!
YES... AT PRECISELY THE SPOT FROM WHICH WE LEFT!

THAT WAS... REALLY AMAZING, WONDER WOMAN!
AND... IT'S MADE ME REALIZE SOMETHING.
OLYMPUS! THE GREEK GODS! ABSOLUTELY ASTOUNDING!
WHAT IS THAT, SUPERMAN?

THAT I WAS FOOLING MYSELF WHEN I THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE A CHANCE FOR ROMANCE BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WONDER WOMAN.
BEFORE HERMES CALLED YOU AWAY YOU SAID I STOOD AS AN EQUAL TO THE GODS. BUT I DON'T.
MORE THAN EVER, I SEE THAT NOW.

I.... ADMIRE YOU, WONDER WOMAN. I RESPECT YOU. BUT... I REALLY AM JUST A BOY FROM KANSAS...
I AGREE WITH YOUR DECISION, SUPERMAN, IF NOT ALL YOUR REASONING.
YOU'RE... WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE!
WE ARE OF DIFFERENT WORLDS -- DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES. PERHAPS WE CAN NEVER BE LOVERS...

BUT... I HOPE WE CAN BE FRIENDS...
...IF ONLY YOU WOULD PLEASE CALL ME DIANA.
DEAL.


IF YOU WILL CALL ME...
CLARK...
DON'T GO AWAY! OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CONTINUES AFTER THE NEXT PAGE...!

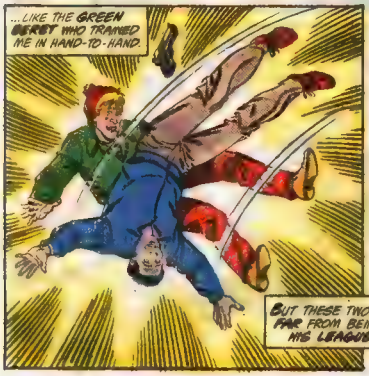
medley

BYRNE / PLOT • SCHAFFENBERGER / PENCILS • STERN / SCRIPT • ORDWAY / INKS • OAKLEY / LETTERS • SCOTESE / COLORS

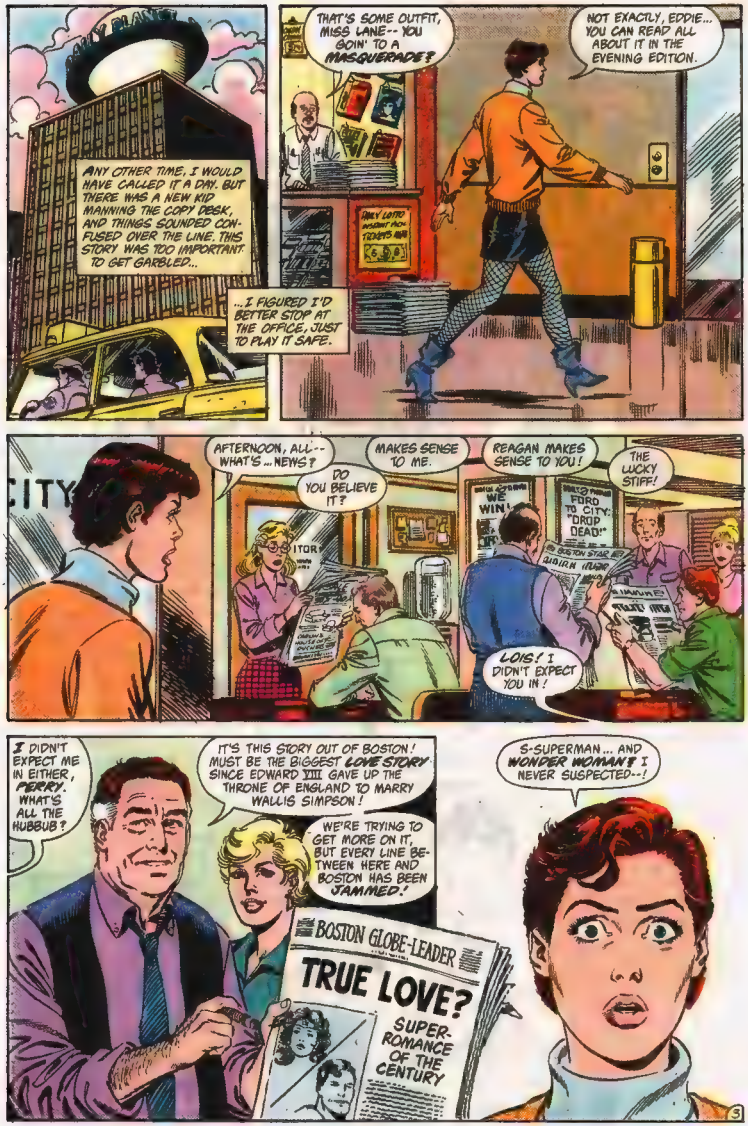
MY NAME IS LOIS LANE. I'M A REPORTER
YOU'VE PROBABLY SEEN MY BY-LINE IN THE DAILY PLANET... JUST UNDER THE HEADLINES.
YOU DON'T GET THE BIG STORIES WITHOUT TAKING A FEW RISKS. BUT RIGHT NOW, IT LOOKED LIKE I'D TAKEN ONE TOO MANY!
THIS IS THE DAME I TOL' YA ABOUT, CHOLLY... SAID SHE WAS LOOKIN' FOR THE BOSS.
IZZAT SO?

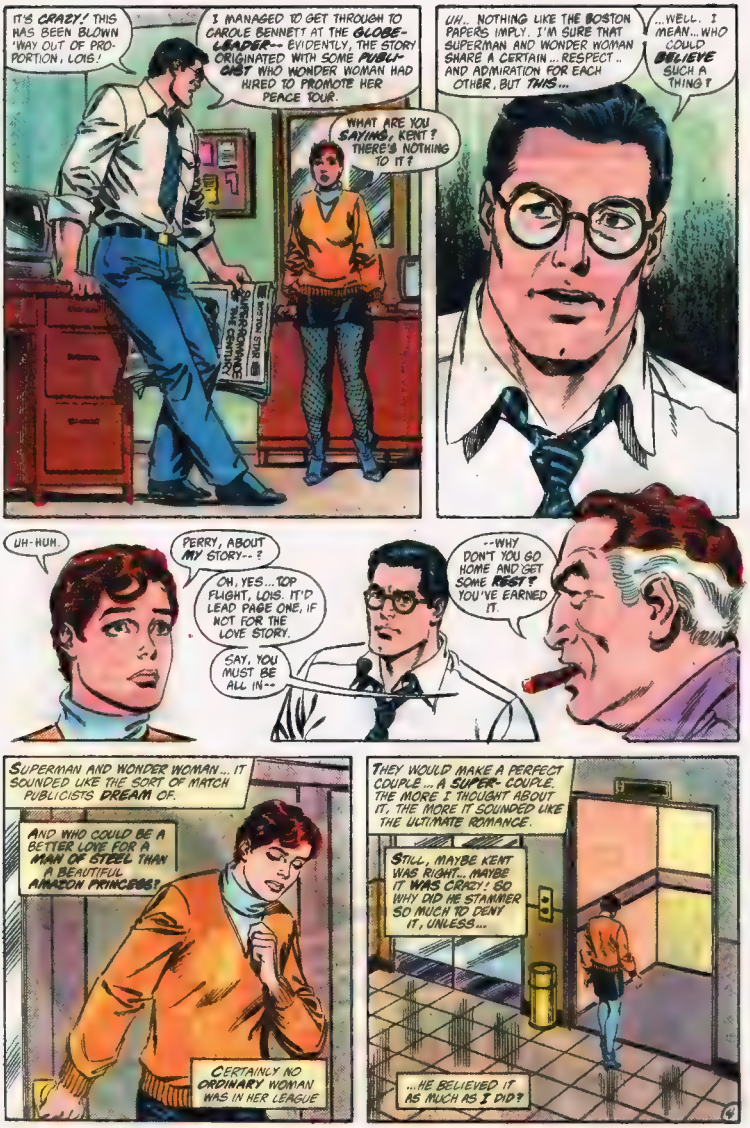
EVERYTHING WOULDA BEEN FINE IF I HADN'T LOST MY WIG.
LOTSA FOLKS WANNA SEE MR. KOZAK. YOU DON'T LOOK MUCH LIKE HIS TYPE TO ME... MAYBE YOU'RE MY TYPE, HUH?
MAYBE..

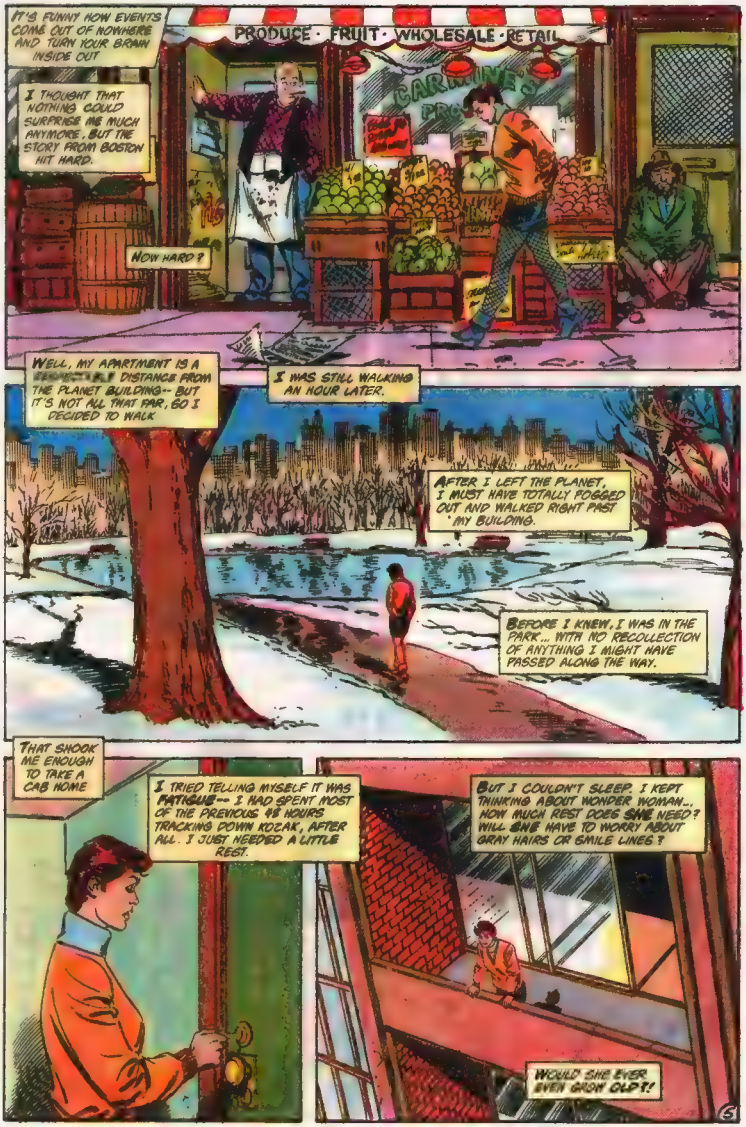
...BUT I DOUBT IT!
ONE THING I'VE NOTICED OVER THE YEARS... MOST MEN WHO USE GUNS ARE LOST WITHOUT THEM. THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS, OF COURSE...



YES, DESPITE YOUR... DISTRACTING ATTIRE--
--I RECOGNIZED YOU IMMEDIATELY. YOU SEE, I SAW YOU ON A.M. METROPOLIS LAST MONTH... AND I NEVER FORGET A FACE.
GENTLEMAN GEORGE KOZAK WAS AS SLIPPERY AS THEY COME... A WHITE COLLAR CRIMINAL WHO'D GONE INTO EXTORTION BEFORE HE WAS CAUGHT.
SIX WEEKS AGO, HE'D ESCAPED POLICE CUSTODY IN ANOTHER CITY.
TWO NIGHTS AGO, I'D GOTTEN A TIP HE WAS IN TOWN... AND I SET OUT TO FIND HIM.
IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT WE HAD TO MEET THIS WAY, MS. LANE. I MUST ASK YOU TO KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM.
I ONCE INTERVIEWED A LAS VEGAS CHORUS GIRL WHO'D DEVELOPED HER OWN STYLE OF SELF-DEFENSE.
SHE COULD'VE TAUGHT THE GREEN BERETS A FEW THINGS!
I TIED THEM UP AS BEST I COULD, BUT KNOTS WERE NEVER MY STRONG SUIT. FORTUNATELY, THERE WAS A PAY PHONE DOWN THE BLOCK.
IF IT WAS WORKING, I HAD NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. THAT WAS A BIG "IF" FOR THIS NEIGHBORHOOD--
--BUT MY LUCK HELD. WITHIN MINUTES, KOZAK AND HIS GOONS WERE IN CUSTODY. I GAVE MY STATEMENT TO METROPOLIS'S FINEST, AND PHONED MY STORY TO THE COPY DESK.
THEN, A REAL MIRACLE HAPPENED... I ACTUALLY GOT A CAB TO STOP FOR ME IN SUICIDE SLUM!
TAKE ME TO THE DAILY PLANET!
2


DAILY PLANET
ANY OTHER TIME, I WOULD HAVE CALLED IT A DAY. BUT THERE WAS A NEW KID MANNING THE COPY DESK, AND THINGS SOUNDED CONFUSED OVER THE LINE. THIS STORY WAS TOO IMPORTANT TO GET GARBLED...
...I FIGURED I'D BETTER STOP AT THE OFFICE, JUST TO PLAY IT SAFE.
THAT'S SOME OUTFIT, MISS LANE-- YOU GOIN' TO A MASQUERADE?
NOT EXACTLY, EDDIE... YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE EVENING EDITION.
AFTERNOON, ALL-- WHAT'S ...NEWS?
DO YOU BELIEVE IT?
MAKES SENSE TO ME.
REAGAN MAKES SENSE TO YOU!
THE LUCKY STIFF!
FORD TO CITY: "DROP DEAD!"
LOIS! I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU IN!
I DIDN'T EXPECT ME IN EITHER, PERRY. WHAT'S ALL THE HUBBUB?
IT'S THIS STORY OUT OF BOSTON! MUST BE THE BIGGEST LOVE STORY SINCE EDWARD VIII GAVE UP THE THRONE OF ENGLAND TO MARRY WALLIS SIMPSON!
WE'RE TRYING TO GET MORE ON IT, BUT EVERY LINE BETWEEN HERE AND BOSTON HAS BEEN JAMMED!
BOSTON GLOBE-LEADER
TRUE LOVE?
SUPER-ROMANCE OF THE CENTURY
S-SUPERMAN... AND WONDER WOMAN? I NEVER SUSPECTED--!


IT'S CRAZY! THIS HAS BEEN BLOWN WAY OUT OF PROPORTION, LOIS!
I MANAGED TO GET THROUGH TO CAROLE BENNETT AT THE GLOBE-LEADER-- EVIDENTLY, THE STORY ORIGINATED WITH SOME PUBLICIST WHO WONDER WOMAN HAD HIRED TO PROMOTE HER PEACE TOUR.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, KENT? THERE'S NOTHING TO IT?
UH... NOTHING LIKE THE BOSTON PAPERS IMPLY. I'M SURE THAT SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN SHARE A CERTAIN... RESPECT.. AND ADMIRATION FOR EACH OTHER, BUT THIS...
...WELL. I MEAN...WHO COULD BELIEVE SUCH A THING?
UH-HUH.
PERRY, ABOUT MY STORY--?
OH, YES...TOP FLIGHT, LOIS. IT'D LEAD PAGE ONE, IF NOT FOR THE LOVE STORY.
SAY, YOU MUST BE ALL IN--
--WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME AND GET SOME REST? YOU'VE EARNED IT.
SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN... IT SOUNDED LIKE THE SORT OF MATCH PUBLICISTS DREAM OF.
AND WHO COULD BE A BETTER LOVE FOR A MAN OF STEEL THAN A BEAUTIFUL AMAZON PRINCESS?
CERTAINLY NO ORDINARY WOMAN WAS IN HER LEAGUE
THEY WOULD MAKE A PERFECT COUPLE... A SUPER- COUPLE. THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE IT SOUNDED LIKE THE ULTIMATE ROMANCE.
STILL, MAYBE KENT WAS RIGHT... MAYBE IT WAS CRAZY! SO WHY DID HE STAMMER SO MUCH TO DENY IT, UNLESS...
...HE BELIEVED IT AS MUCH AS I DID?
4


IT'S FUNNY HOW EVENTS COME OUT OF NOWHERE AND TURN YOUR BRAIN INSIDE OUT.
I THOUGHT THAT NOTHING COULD SURPRISE ME MUCH ANYMORE. BUT THE STORY FROM BOSTON HIT HARD.
HOW HARD?
PRODUCE · FRUIT · WHOLESALE · RETAIL
WELL, MY APARTMENT IS A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM THE PLANET BUILDING-- BUT IT'S NOT ALL THAT FAR, SO I DECIDED TO WALK.
I WAS STILL WALKING AN HOUR LATER.
AFTER I LEFT THE PLANET, I MUST HAVE TOTALLY ZONED OUT AND WALKED RIGHT PAST MY BUILDING.
BEFORE I KNEW, I WAS IN THE PARK... WITH NO RECOLLECTION OF ANYTHING I MIGHT HAVE PASSED ALONG THE WAY.
THAT SHOOK ME ENOUGH TO TAKE A CAB HOME
I TRIED TELLING MYSELF IT WAS PATHOS-- I HAD SPENT MOST OF THE PREVIOUS 48 HOURS TRACKING DOWN KOZAK, AFTER ALL. I JUST NEEDED A LITTLE REST.
BUT I COULDN'T SLEEP. I KEPT THINKING ABOUT WONDER WOMAN... HOW MUCH REST DOES SHE NEED? WILL SHE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GRAY HAIRS OR SMILE LINES?
WOULD SHE EVER EVEN GROW OLD?!

A COLUMNIST FOR A RIVAL PAPER ONCE GOT HIS NOSE OUT OF JOINT OVER THE NUMBER OF EXCLUSIVE SUPERMAN STORIES I LANDED, AND REFERRED TO ME IN PRINT AS "SUPERMAN'S GIRLFRIEND".

I HAD GOTTEN A LOT OF MILEAGE MAKING FUN OF THAT ITEM... BUT I'D ALSO WISHED IT WERE TRUE.

I'D THOUGHT I WAS OVER THAT.

JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, CLARK KENT'S PARENTS TOLD ME THAT THEY'D SECRETLY RAISED SUPERMAN FROM A BABY... THAT HE AND KENT WERE LIKE STEP-BROTHERS.

I WAS OUTRAGED... I ACCUSED SUPERMAN AND KENT OF PLAYING ME FOR A FOOL ALL THESE YEARS. I WAS SO MAD, I STARTED TO WRITE THE WHOLE THING UP... AN EXPOSÉ ON SUPERMAN!

THANK GOD, I DESTROYED IT WHEN I COOLED OFF. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A DEATH WARRANT FOR KENT'S PARENTS.

I HADN'T REALLY FINISHED COMING TO TERMS WITH ALL THAT YET... IT WAS SO RECENT.

AND NOW... THIS.

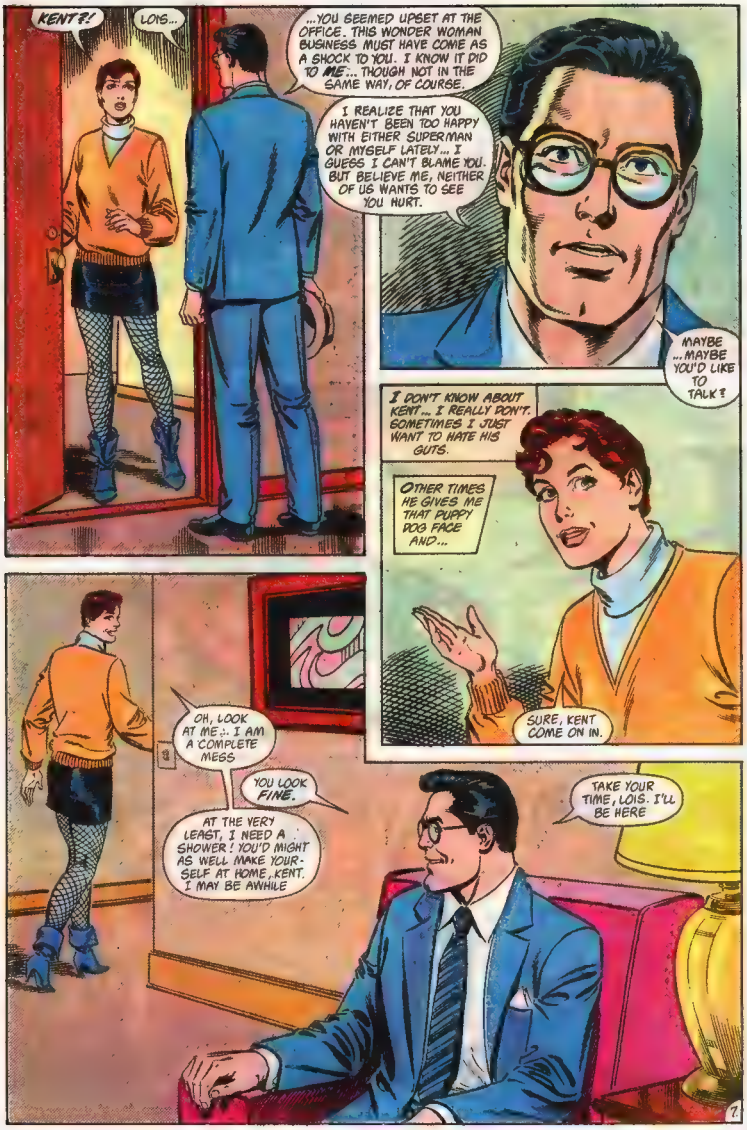
I KNEW I OUGHT TO FACE FACTS... WRITE SUPERMAN OUT OF MY LIFE FOR GOOD, AND START THE NEXT CHAPTER.

AS IF I COULD FORGET SOMEONE LIKE HIM!

IF THERE WERE SOMEONE ELSE-- ANYONE ELSE-- MAYBE...

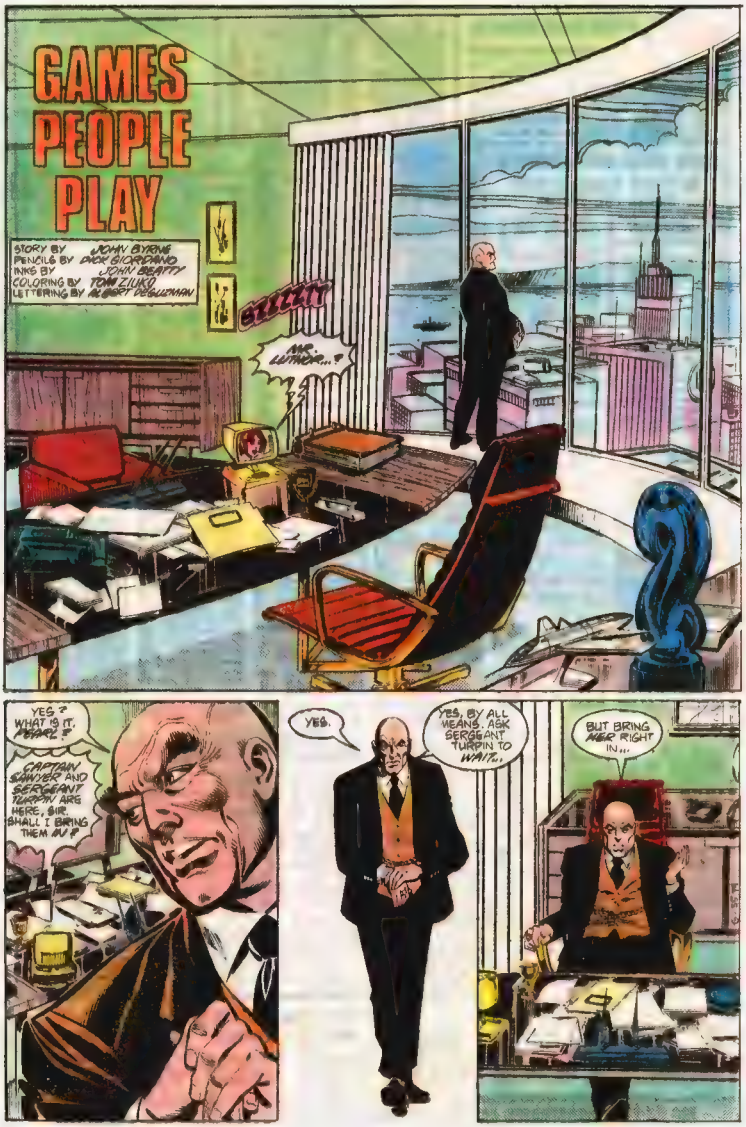
NOK NOK

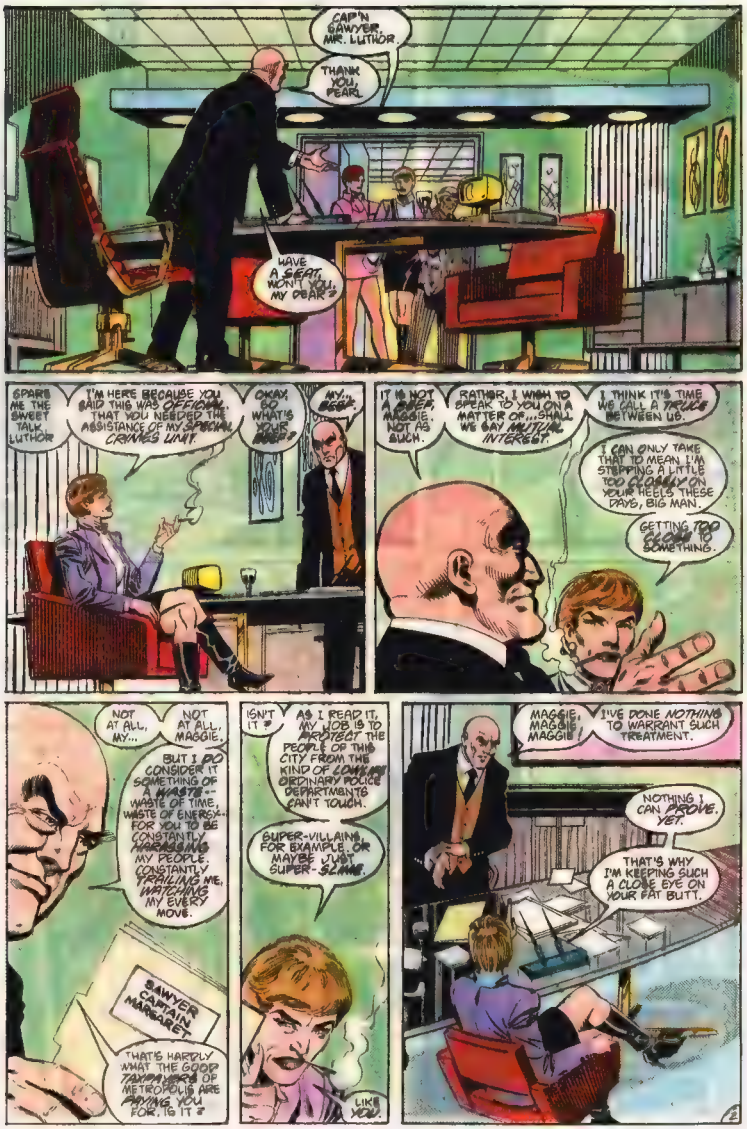
?!?


KENT?!
LOIS...
...YOU SEEMED UPSET AT THE OFFICE. THIS WONDER WOMAN BUSINESS MUST HAVE COME AS A SHOCK TO YOU. I KNOW IT DID TO ME... THOUGH NOT IN THE SAME WAY, OF COURSE.
I REALIZE THAT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TOO HAPPY WITH EITHER SUPERMAN OR MYSELF LATELY... I GUESS I CAN'T BLAME YOU. BUT BELIEVE ME, NEITHER OF US WANTS TO SEE YOU HURT.
MAYBE ...MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO TALK?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT KENT... I REALLY DON'T. SOMETIMES I JUST WANT TO HATE HIS GUTS.
OTHER TIMES HE GIVES ME THAT PUPPY DOG FACE AND...
SURE, KENT COME ON IN.
OH, LOOK AT ME :: I AM A COMPLETE MESS
YOU LOOK FINE.
AT THE VERY LEAST, I NEED A SHOWER! YOU'D MIGHT AS WELL MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME, KENT. I MAY BE AWHILE
TAKE YOUR TIME, LOIS. I'LL BE HERE

ZEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
EH?
OH, NO-- THAT'S THE HYPERSONIC TONE FROM JIMMY OLSEN'S SIGNAL WATCH!
NOT NOW, JIM... OF ALL TIMES, NOT NOW!
I OUGHT TO... NO. JIMMY WOULDN'T SIGNAL ME WITHOUT GOOD REASON.
I CAN'T IGNORE A CALL FOR--
SUPERMAN!
MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO HANDLE THIS AND GET BACK BEFORE LOIS NOTICES THAT CLARK IS GONE
SAY, CLARK, I HAD A THOUGHT
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M FAMISHED! WHILE I'M IN THE SHOWER, WHY DON'T YOU HOP DOWN TO EMILIO'S AND GET US A PIZZA... WITH THE WORKS?
KENT? HELLO?
KENT!
"I'LL BE HERE", HUH? OF ALL THE--!
YOU'RE ON MY LIST, MR. KENT! YOU YOU OHH!!

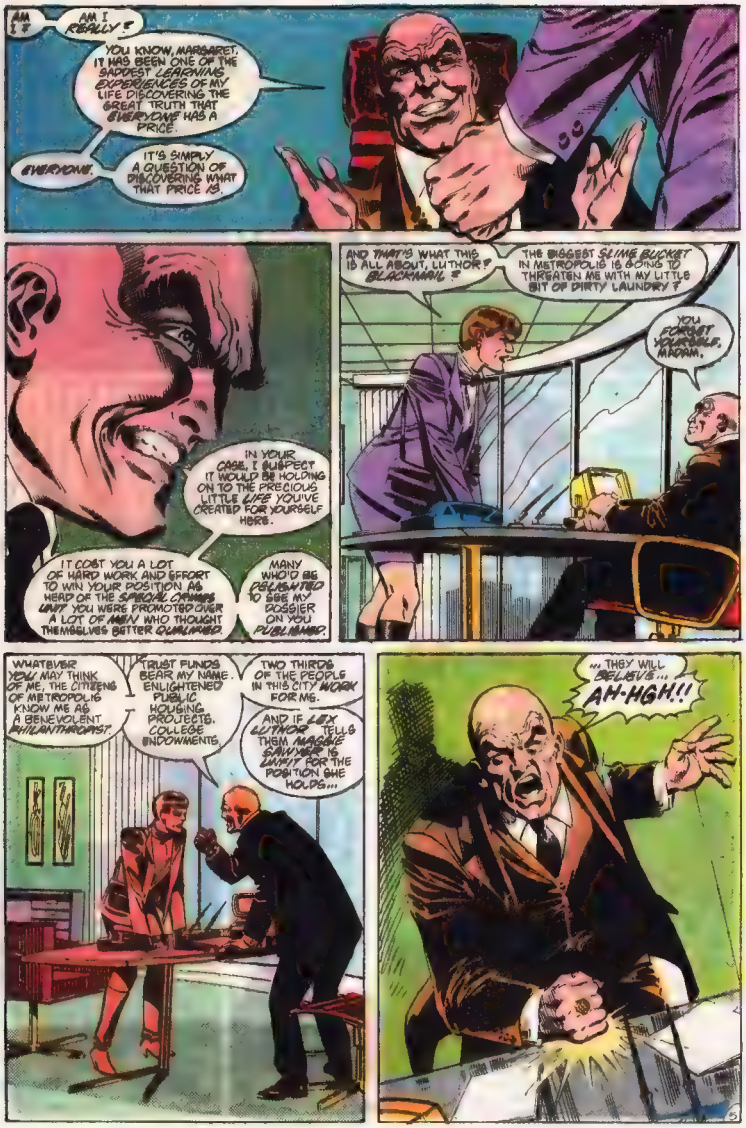
JON BOGDANOVE 4-30-87


GAMES PEOPLE PLAY
STORY BY JOHN BYRNE
PENCILS BY DICK GIORDANO
INKS BY JOHN BEATTY
COLORING BY TOM ZIUKO
LETTERING BY ALBERT DEGUZMAN
SKRRZZT
MR. LUTHOR...?
YES ? WHAT IS IT, PEARL ?
CAPTAIN SAWYER AND SERGEANT TURPIN ARE HERE, SIR. SHALL I BRING THEM IN ?
YES.
YES, BY ALL MEANS. ASK SERGEANT TURPIN TO WAIT.
BUT BRING HER RIGHT IN...

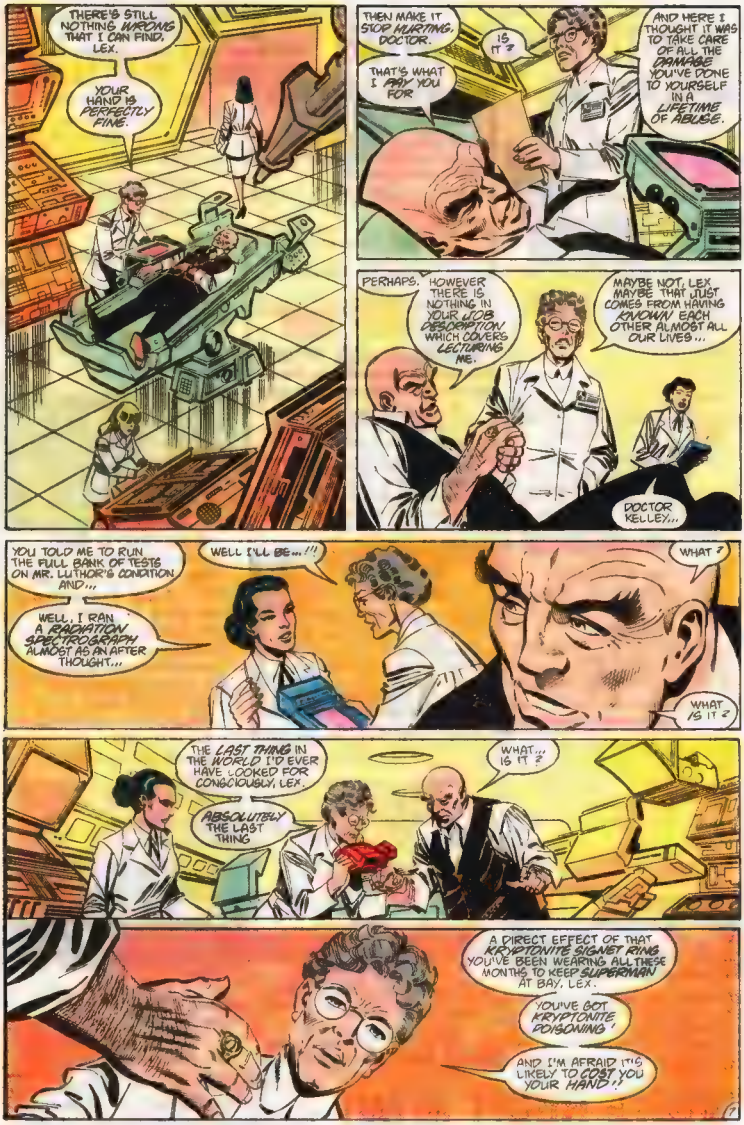

CAP'N SAWYER, MR. LUTHOR.
THANK YOU, PEARL.
HAVE A SEAT, WON'T YOU, MY DEAR?
SPARE ME THE SWEET TALK, LUTHOR.
I'M HERE BECAUSE YOU SAID THIS WAS OFFICIAL, THAT YOU NEEDED THE ASSISTANCE OF MY SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT.
OKAY, SO WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?
MY, MY, BEEF.
IT IS NOT A BEEF, MAGGIE. NOT AS SUCH.
RATHER, I WISH TO SPEAK TO YOU ON A MATTER OF...SHALL WE SAY MUTUAL INTEREST.
I THINK IT'S TIME WE CALL A TRUCE BETWEEN US.
I CAN ONLY TAKE THAT TO MEAN I'M STEPPING A LITTLE TOO CLOSELY ON YOUR HEELS THESE DAYS, BIG MAN.
GETTING TOO CLOSE TO SOMETHING.
NOT AT ALL, MY...
NOT AT ALL, MAGGIE.
BUT I DO CONSIDER IT SOMETHING OF A WASTE -- WASTE OF TIME, WASTE OF ENERGY... FOR YOU TO BE CONSTANTLY HARASSING MY PEOPLE, CONSTANTLY TRAILING ME, WATCHING MY EVERY MOVE.
SAWYER CAPTAIN MARGARET.
THAT'S HARDLY WHAT THE GOOD TAXPAYERS OF METROPOLIS ARE PAYING YOU FOR, IS IT?
ISN'T IT?
AS I READ IT, MY JOB IS TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY FROM THE KIND OF COMPLEX ORDINARY POLICE DEPARTMENTS CAN'T TOUCH.
SUPER-VILLAINS, FOR EXAMPLE. OR MAYBE EVEN SUPER-SLIME.
LIKE YOU.
MAGGIE, MAGGIE, MAGGIE!
I'VE DONE NOTHING TO WARRANT SUCH TREATMENT.
NOTHING I CAN PROVE. YET.
THAT'S WHY I'M KEEPING SUCH A CLOSE EYE ON YOUR FAT BUTT.

MMM...
ON THE OTHER HAND, I HAVE DISCOVERED SOME... INTERESTING THINGS ABOUT YOU, MY DEAR.
YOU'VE BEEN... WATCHING ME?
HOW DARE YOU!
I DARE ANYTHING, MARGARET.
I DARE ALL.
THAT IS HOW I BECAME WHAT I AM, WHO I AM, AND THAT IS HOW I HOLD MY PLACE IN THIS CITY, THIS WORLD.
TAKE A LOOK AT THESE, MAGGIE. THEY ARE THE ONLY COPIES IN EXISTENCE.
THEY REPRESENT AN INTERESTING PROFILE OF AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN.
A WOMAN WITH A SECRET.
A WOMAN NAMED MAGGIE SAWYER.
I DON'T NEED YOUR DOSSIER TO TELL ME THE STORY OF MY OWN LIFE, LUTHOR.
THE CHOICES I'VE MADE HAVE COST ME MY MARRIAGE, AND NEARLY COST ME MY DAUGHTER.
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY THREATEN ME WITH ANY WORSE.
NO?
YOU REALLY SHOULD TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS DOSSIER, MAGGIE. PERHAPS IT WILL HAVE GREATER SIGNIFICANCE IF YOU SEE THE DETAILS LAID OUT FOR YOU IN STARK BLACK AND WHITE.
DZZT!
YOU BUZZED, MR. LUTHOR?
YES, COME AND CLEAR THIS MUDDLE OFF MY DESK, WOULD YOU SANDRA?
IT'S HARD FOR CAPTAIN SAWYER AND ME TO CONCENTRATE WITH ALL THIS CLUTTER.
3

CERTAINLY, MR. LUTHOR.
MY, THAT'S A DELIGHTFUL PERFUME YOU'RE WEARING, SANDRA.
DON'T YOU THINK SO, CAPTAIN?
...YES...
WHY, THANK YOU, CAPTAIN.
AND MAY I SAY THAT'S A LOVELY BROOCH YOU'RE WEARING...
THANKS...
ALL RIGHT, LUTHOR, I THINK WE CAN ASSUME YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT.
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE STOP PLAYING GAMES NOW?
THANK YOU, SANDRA. YOU MAY GO NOW...
BUT, MAGGIE, YOU CONTINUE TO DO ME A GREAT INJUSTICE.
ACCUSING ME OF PLAYING GAMES, WHEN I HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT ATTEMPT TO MAKE YOUR VISIT HERE AS DELIGHTFUL AS POSSIBLE.
ESPECIALLY GIVEN THAT WE SHARE SO MANY SIMILAR TASTES...
YOU DON'T FOOL ANYONE, LUTHOR.
YOU'RE GETTING SO USED TO PEOPLE FALLING ALL OVER THEMSELVES WHENEVER YOU EVEN BLINK, YOU'RE FORGETTING THERE ARE STILL SOME PEOPLE IN METROPOLIS WHO DON'T PLAY BY YOUR RULES.
AND YOU'RE LOOKING AT ONE OF THEM RIGHT NOW!

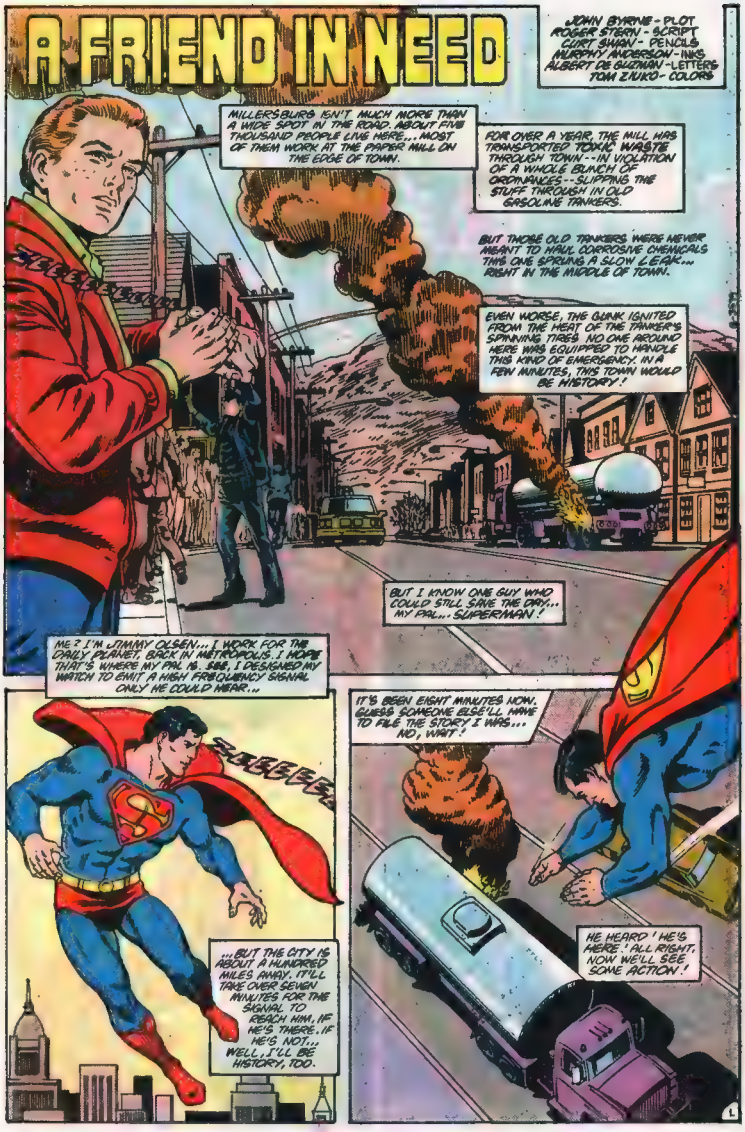

AM I ?
AM I REALLY ?
YOU KNOW, MARGARET, IT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE SADDEST LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE DISCOVERING THE GREAT TRUTH THAT EVERYONE HAS A PRICE.
EVERYONE.
IT'S SIMPLY A QUESTION OF DISCOVERING WHAT THAT PRICE IS.
IN YOUR CASE, I SUSPECT IT WOULD BE HOLDING ON TO THE PRECIOUS LITTLE LIFE YOU'VE CREATED FOR YOURSELF HERE.
IT COST YOU A LOT OF HARD WORK AND EFFORT TO WIN YOUR POSITION AS HEAD OF THE SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT YOU WERE PROMOTED OVER A LOT OF MEN WHO THOUGHT THEMSELVES BETTER QUALIFIED.
MANY WHO'D BE DELIGHTED TO SEE MY DOSSIER ON YOU PUBLISHED.
AND THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, LUTHOR? BLACKMAIL ?
THE BIGGEST SLIME BUCKET IN METROPOLIS IS GOING TO THREATEN ME WITH MY LITTLE BIT OF DIRTY LAUNDRY ?
YOU FORGET YOURSELF, MADAM.
WHATEVER YOU MAY THINK OF ME, THE CITIZENS OF METROPOLIS KNOW ME AS A BENEVOLENT PHILANTHROPIST.
TRUST FUNDS BEAR MY NAME. ENLIGHTENED PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS. COLLEGE ENDOWMENTS.
TWO THIRDS OF THE PEOPLE IN THIS CITY WORK FOR ME.
AND IF LEX LUTHOR TELLS THEM MARGOLE SAWYER IS UNFIT FOR THE POSITION SHE HOLDS...
"... THEY WILL BELIEVE..."
AH-HGH!!

HE... JUST SCREAMED OUT...
WHEN HE THUMPED THE DESK...
BOSS!
ARE YOU OKAY??
BOSS!
BOSS, LEMME HELP...
KELLEY...
DR. KELLEY...
YEAH... I'LL CALL HER AS SOON AS...
NO!
NEED HER NOW!
GOT TO GET TO HER...!!
GOT TO GET TO HER...!!!
BOSS!
BOSS, WAIT...!!!

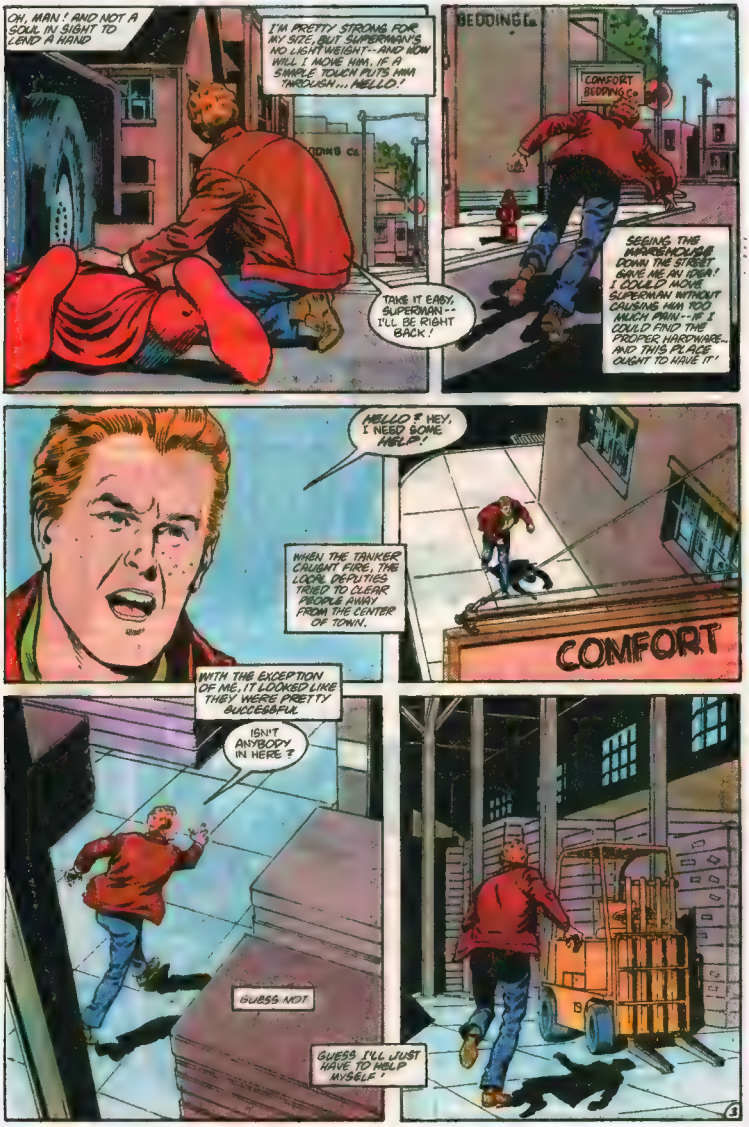

THERE'S STILL NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT I CAN FIND, LEX.
YOUR HAND IS PERFECTLY FINE.
THEN MAKE IT STOP HURTING, DOCTOR.
IS IT?
THAT'S WHAT I PAY YOU FOR.
AND HERE I THOUGHT IT WAS TO TAKE CARE OF ALL THE DAMAGE YOU'VE DONE TO YOURSELF IN A LIFETIME OF ABUSE.
PERHAPS. HOWEVER THERE IS NOTHING IN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION WHICH COVERS LECTURING ME.
MAYBE NOT, LEX. MAYBE THAT JUST COMES FROM HAVING KNOWN EACH OTHER ALMOST ALL OUR LIVES...
DOCTOR KELLEY...
YOU TOLD ME TO RUN THE FULL BANK OF TESTS ON MR. LUTHOR'S CONDITION AND...
WELL, I RAN A RADIATION SPECTROGRAPH ALMOST AS AN AFTER THOUGHT...
WELL I'LL BE...!!
WHAT?
WHAT IS IT?
THE LAST THING IN THE WORLD I'D EVER HAVE LOOKED FOR CONSCIOUSLY, LEX.
ABSOLUTELY THE LAST THING
WHAT... IS IT?
A DIRECT EFFECT OF THAT KRYPTONITE SIGNET RING YOU'VE BEEN WEARING ALL THESE MONTHS TO KEEP SUPERMAN AT BAY, LEX.
YOU'VE GOT KRYPTONITE POISONING,
AND I'M AFRAID IT'S LIKELY TO COST YOU YOUR HAND!

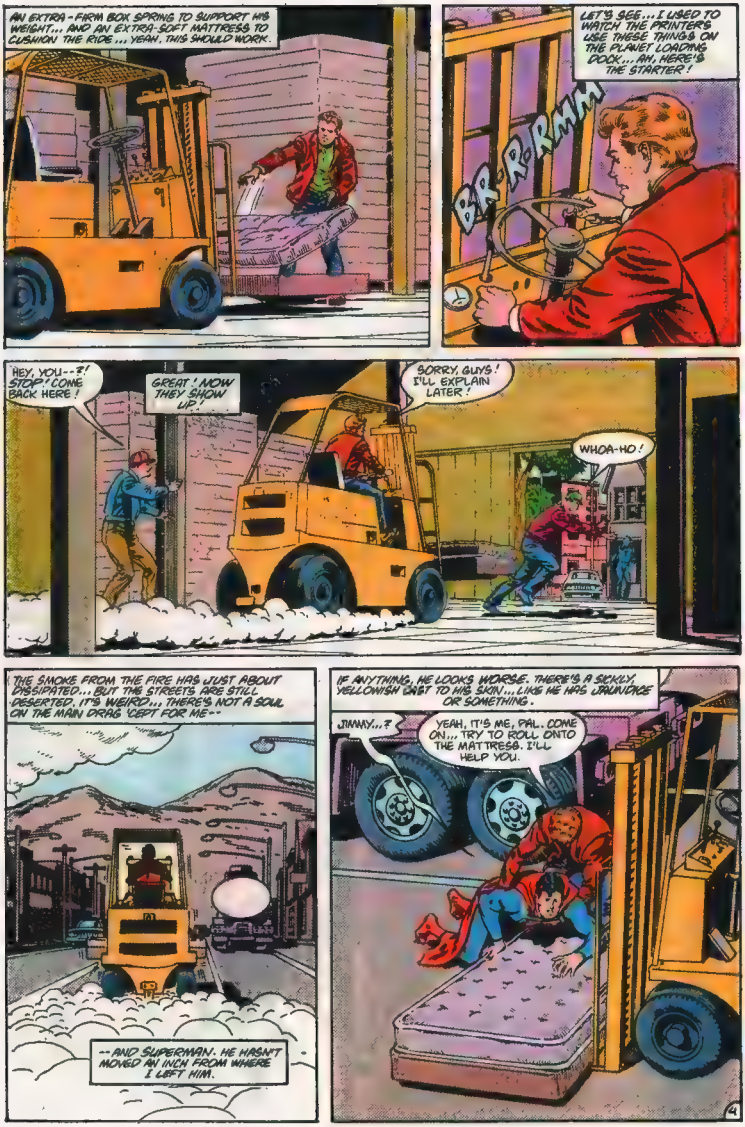
SO...
WHAT DID THAT BIG "BOZO" HAVE TO SAY, MAGGIE?
NOTHING I HAVEN'T HEARD BEFORE, BEN.
NOTHING I HAVEN'T HAD TO PUT UP WITH ALMOST ALL MY ADULT LIFE.
YOU MEAN... ABOUT...
WHAT ELSE?
MR. LUTHOR SEEMED TO THINK IT WAS SOMETHING HE COULD HOLD OVER ME, HAD A WHOLE DOSSIER ON MY PRIVATE LIFE.
DID YOU MANAGE TO PUT THE "SNATCH" ON IT?
I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF HIM HAVING ANY "DOPE" ON YOU
I WON'T DENY I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, ESPECIALLY AFTER HE RAN OUT AND JUST LEFT THE THING LYING THERE.
BUT THIS IS THE MERIT AND NOW, BEN.
I FOUGHT HARD TO GET WHERE I AM.
IF LEX LUTHOR THINKS I'M GOING TO TUCK MY TAIL BETWEEN MY LEGS AND RUN, JUST BECAUSE HE NOW HOLDS WHAT HE THINKS IS HIS BIG TRUMP...
...HE'S MISJUDGED HIS TARGET.
I TOLD SUPERMAN ONCE THAT WHEN I GAVE UP THE CUSTODY FIGHT FOR MY DAUGHTER AND LEFT STAR CITY IT WAS THE LAST TIME I EVER RAN AWAY. FROM ANYTHING.
IF LEX LUTHOR WANTS TO PLAY DIRTY, I'M NOT GOING TO JOIN HIM ON HIS LEVEL BY SNATCHING HIS "EVIDENCE."
BUT HE'S GOING TO FIND OUT HE'S STUCK A BIG, FAT FINGER IN THE WRONG PIE, THIS TIME.
AND WHAT'S IN THERE IS GOING TO BITE OFF HIS WHOLE DAMN HAND!
ACE

Maguire & GIBBONS


A FRIEND IN NEED
JOHN BYRNE - PLOT
ROGER STERN - SCRIPT
CORT SHAW - PENCILS
MURPHY ANDERSON - INKS
ALBERT DE GUZMAN - LETTERS
TOM ZUKO - COLORS
MILLERSBURG ISN'T MUCH MORE THAN A WIDE SPOT IN THE ROAD. ABOUT FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE LIVE HERE... MOST OF THEM WORK AT THE PAPER MILL ON THE EDGE OF TOWN.
FOR OVER A YEAR, THE MILL WAS TRANSPORTED TOXIC WASTE THROUGH TOWN - IN VIOLATION OF A WHOLE BUNCH OF ORDINANCES -- SLIPPING THE STUFF THROUGH IN OLD GASOLINE TANKERS.
BUT THOSE OLD TANKERS WERE NEVER MEANT TO HAUL CORROSIVE CHEMICALS. THIS ONE SPRUNG A SLOW LEAK... RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN.
EVEN WORSE, THE GUNK IGNITED FROM THE HEAT OF THE TANKER'S SPINNING TIRES. NO ONE AROUND HERE WAS EQUIPPED TO HANDLE THIS KIND OF EMERGENCY. IN A FEW MINUTES, THIS TOWN WOULD BE HISTORY!
BUT I KNOW ONE GUY WHO COULD STILL SAVE THE DAY... MY PAL... SUPERMAN!
ME? I'M JIMMY OLSEN... I WORK FOR THE DAILY PLANET, BACK IN METROPOLIS. I HOPE THAT'S WHERE MY PAL IS. SEE, I DESIGNED MY WATCH TO EMIT A HIGH FREQUENCY SIGNAL ONLY HE COULD HEAR...
...BUT THE CITY IS ABOUT A HUNDRED MILES AWAY. IT'LL TAKE OVER SEVEN MINUTES FOR THE SIGNAL TO REACH HIM. IF HE'S THERE. IF HE'S NOT... WELL, I'LL BE HISTORY, TOO.
IT'S BEEN EIGHT MINUTES NOW. GUESS SOMEONE ELSE'LL HAVE TO FILE THE STORY I WAS... NO, WAIT!
HE HEARD! HE'S HERE! ALL RIGHT, NOW WE'LL SEE SOME ACTION!
4

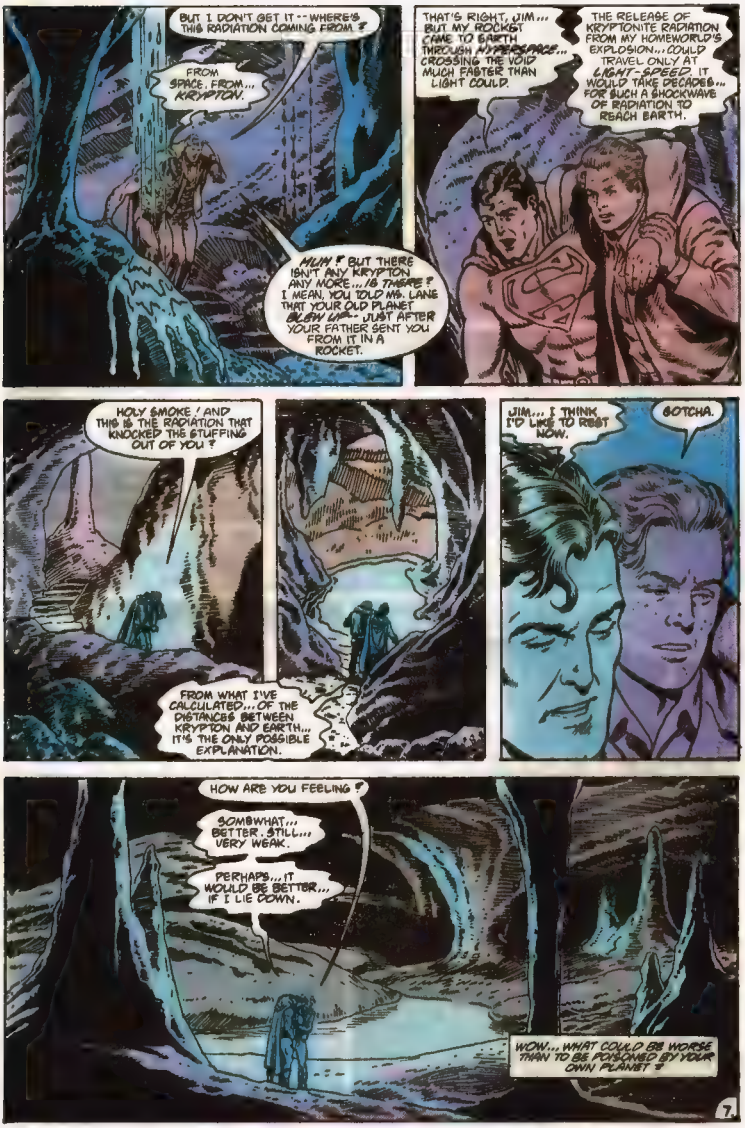
HE KNEW JUST WHAT TO DO...
...CRIMPING THE LEAK SHUT WITH ONE HAND, WHILE HE SMOTHERED THE FIRE WITH A LUNGFUL OF CARBON DIOXIDE
INCREDIBLE! HE KNOCKED THE EMERGENCY IN UNDER 30 SECONDS! WHAT A GUY!
WHAT... THE...
...NECK?!?
SUPERMAN!!
SUPERMAN, WHAT'S WRONG?
AHHK!! JIMMY... DON'T...
HE...HE FLINCHED! I'VE SEEN BULLETS BOUNCE OFF HIS CHEST... BUT HE ACTED LIKE MY TOUCH HURT HIM!
WHAT HAPPENED? WAS THERE SOMETHING IN THE CHEMICALS--?
NO...NOT THAT... SOMETHING ELSE...
...SOMETHING... OUTSIDE. NEVER FELT... SUCH PAIN. HURTS... JUST TO BREATHE.
CAN HARDLY... MOVE. I NEED... YOUR HELP, JIM...
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO, SUPERMAN? JUST NAME IT!
FEEL LIKE... I'M DYING. YOU HAVE... TO GET ME... AWAY FROM HERE.

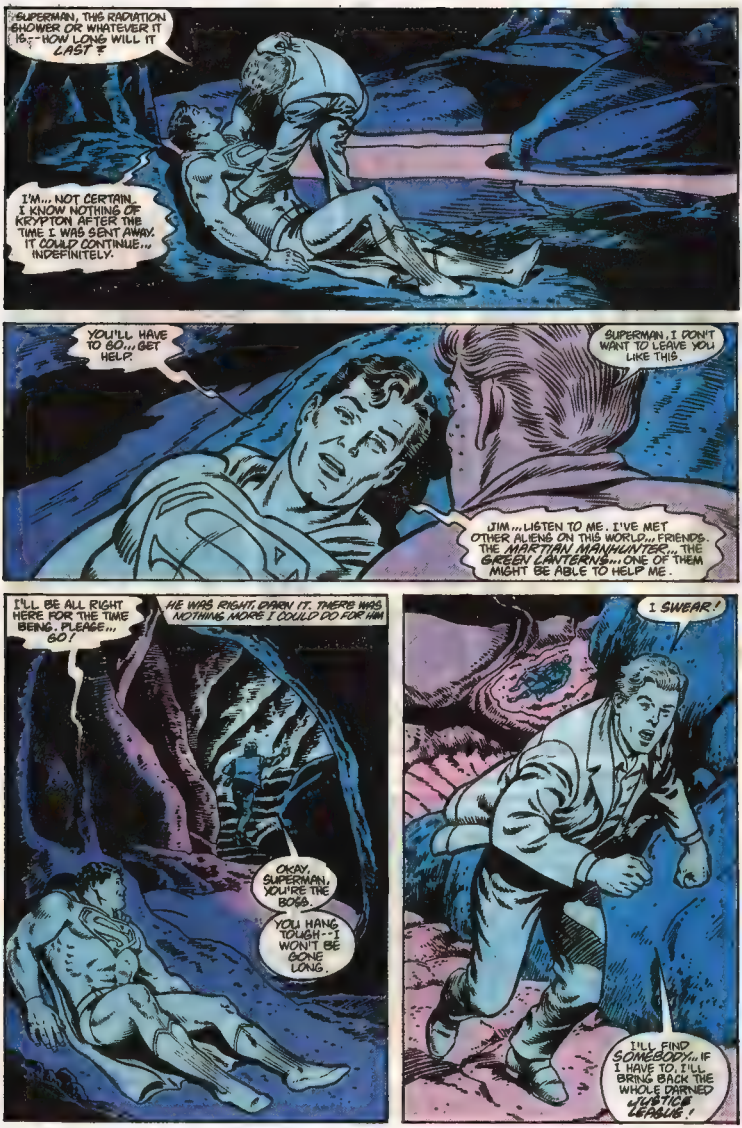

OH, MAN! AND NOT A SOUL IN SIGHT TO LEND A HAND
I'M PRETTY STRONG FOR MY SIZE, BUT SUPERMAN'S NO LIGHTWEIGHT--AND HOW WILL I MOVE HIM, IF A SIMPLE TOUCH PUTS HIM THROUGH... HELLO!
TAKE IT EASY, SUPERMAN--I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
BEDDING
COMFORT BEDDING Co.
SEEING THE WAREHOUSE DOWN THE STREET GAVE ME AN IDEA! I COULD MOVE SUPERMAN WITHOUT CAUSING HIM TOO MUCH PAIN--IF I COULD FIND THE PROPER HARDWARE... AND THIS PLACE OUGHT TO HAVE IT!
HELLO? HEY, I NEED SOME HELP!
WHEN THE TANKER CAUGHT FIRE, THE LOCAL DEPUTIES TRIED TO CLEAR PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE CENTER OF TOWN.
COMFORT
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ME, IT LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE PRETTY SUCCESSFUL.
ISN'T ANYBODY IN HERE?
GUESS NOT.
GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO HELP MYSELF!

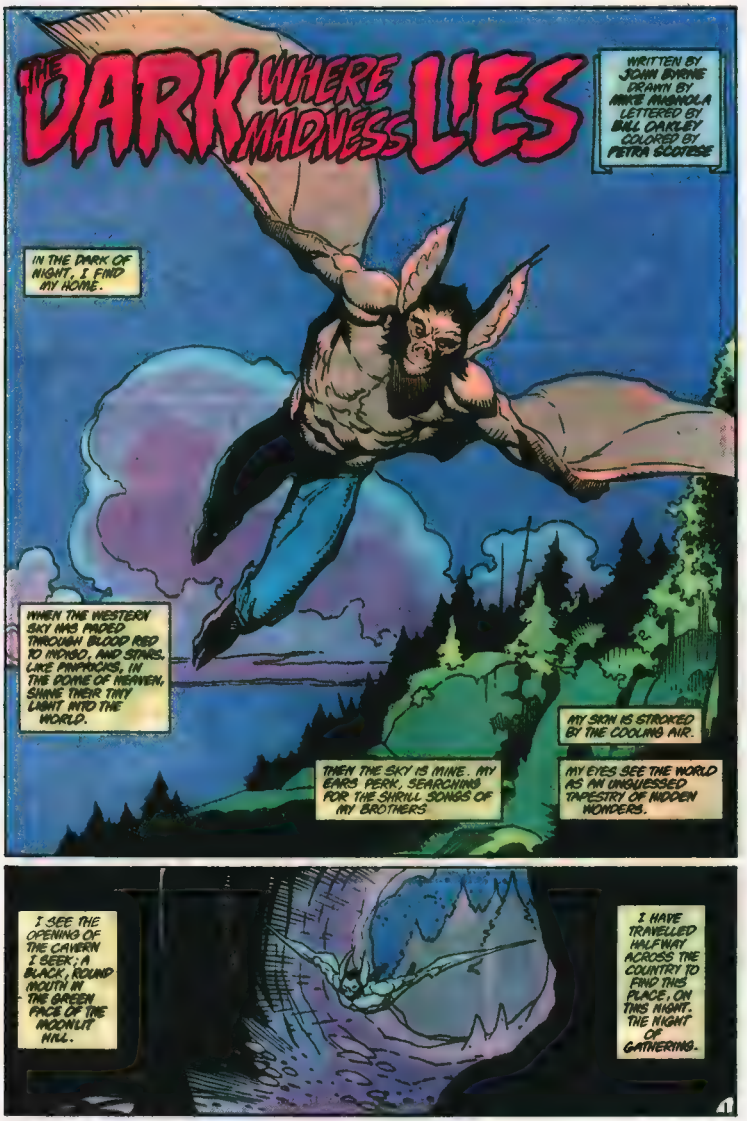

AN EXTRA-FIRM BOX SPRING TO SUPPORT HIS WEIGHT... AND AN EXTRA-SOFT MATTRESS TO CUSHION THE RIDE... YEAH. THIS SHOULD WORK.
LET'S SEE... I USED TO WATCH THE PRINTER'S LEE THESE THINGS ON THE PLANET LOADING DOCK... AH, HERE'S THE STARTER!
BR-R-R-R-M-M
HEY, YOU--?! STOP! COME BACK HERE!
GREAT! NOW THEY SHOW UP!
SORRY, GUYS! I'LL EXPLAIN LATER!
WHOA-HO!
THE SMOKE FROM THE FIRE HAS JUST ABOUT DISSIPATED... BUT THE STREETS ARE STILL DESERTED. IT'S WEIRD... THERE'S NOT A SOUL ON THE MAIN DRAG 'CEPT FOR ME--
--AND SUPERMAN. HE HASN'T MOVED AN INCH FROM WHERE I LEFT HIM.
IF ANYTHING, HE LOOKS WORSE. THERE'S A SICKLY, YELLOWISH CAST TO HIS SKIN... LIKE HE HAS JAUNDICE OR SOMETHING.
JIMMY...?
YEAH, IT'S ME, PAL.. COME ON... TRY TO ROLL ONTO THE MATTRESS. I'LL HELP YOU.
4

THERE, IS THAT MORE COMFORTABLE?
A... LITTLE... YES...
MAN, HE SQUIRMS AWFUL! I GOTTA GET HIM TO A DOCTOR!
JIMMY... WHERE ARE WE--?
THERE'S A LITTLE HOSPITAL UP AHEAD... JUST A CLINIC, REALLY, BUT THEY OUGHT'TA BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING!
NO... DON'T STOP. GO NORTH... OUT OF TOWN... TO THE CAVES.
UH, SUPERMAN... I REALLY THINK YOU NEED--!
DOCTOR CAN'T HELP, JIM... NEED COVER... KRYPTONITE...
MOUNT FEAR CAVERNS
THE RADIATION FROM KRYPTONITE CAN KILL HIM--BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF THIS STUFF ON EARTH, HE TOLD ME SO HIMSELF ONCE. WE'D SURELY BE OUT OF ITS RANGE BY NOW
HE'S DELIRIOUS--HE HAS TO BE.
BUT HE'S SUPERMAN... WHAT ELSE COULD BE DOING THIS TO HIM?
I HAVE TO TRUST HIS JUDGMENT.
HANG IN THERE, SUPERMAN... JUST A COUPLE MORE MINUTES.
END OF THE LINE. THE GRADE HERE IS TOO UNEVEN TO DRIVE THE FORKLIFT INTO THE CAVE.
UH... WE CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER THIS WAY, SUPERMAN.
THAT'S... ALL RIGHT... JIM...
MOUN
CAVE

...I'VE HAD... ENOUGH REST. I SHOULD... BE ABLE TO... WALK NOW.
ARE YOU SURE?
AAAHK!
N-NO
'SOKAY. I'M RIGHT HERE-- LEAN ON ME
THANKS. HAVE TO GO ON... DEEPER INTO THE CAVES.
SURE. WE'LL JUST TAKE IT A STEP AT A TIME.
IT KILLS ME TO SEE HIM LIKE THIS
THERE ONCE WERE BIG PLANS TO TURN THIS PLACE INTO A TOURIST ATTRACTION-- BUT THE MONEY RAN OUT BEFORE THE TOWN COULD DO MORE THAN PUT IN A FEW STAIRS AND STICK UP SOME SIGNS.
HOW'RE YOU HOLDING UP? WANT TO STOP AND REST A WHILE?
N-NO... KEEP MOVING.
LEAD ORE IN THE ROCK... PROVIDES SOME SHIELDING FROM THE RADIATION. WE MUST... GO DEEPER
6

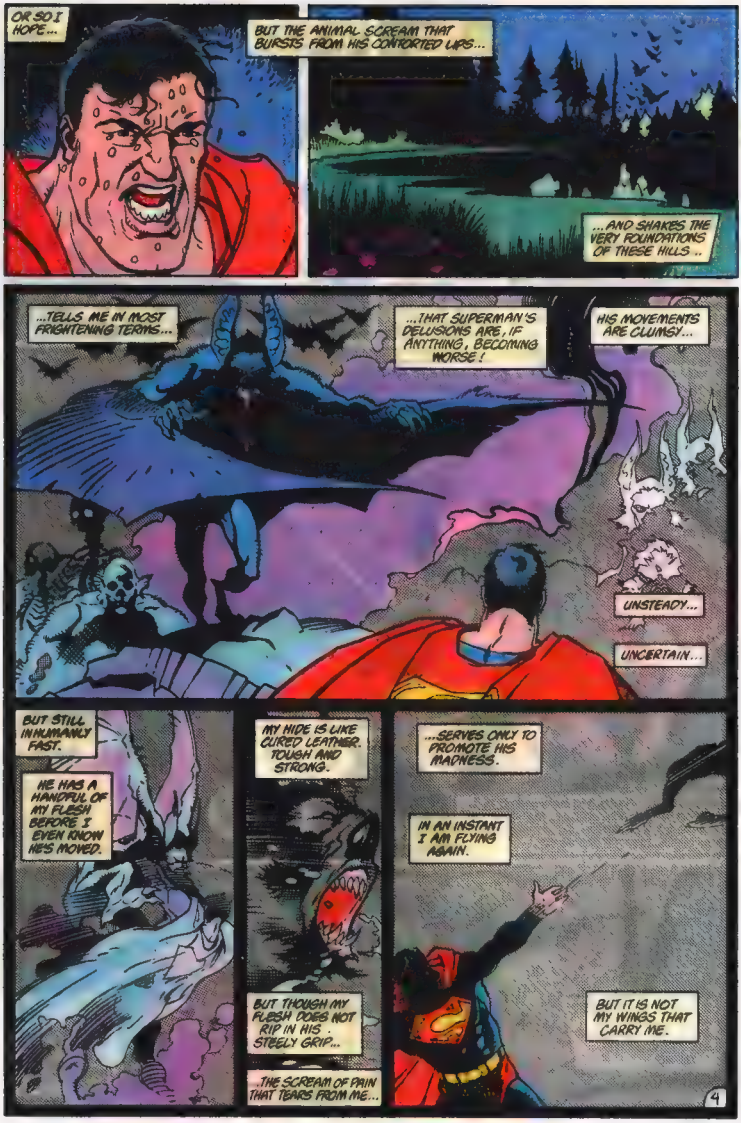

BUT I DON'T GET IT -- WHERE'S THIS RADIATION COMING FROM ?
FROM SPACE. FROM... KRYPTON.
MUM ? BUT THERE ISN'T ANY KRYPTON ANY MORE... IS THERE ? I MEAN, YOU TOLD MR. LANE THAT YOUR OLD PLANET BLEW UP -- JUST AFTER YOUR FATHER SENT YOU FROM IT IN A ROCKET.
THAT'S RIGHT, JIM... BUT MY ROCKET CAME TO EARTH THROUGH HYPERSPACE... CROSSING THE VOID MUCH FASTER THAN LIGHT COULD.
THE RELEASE OF KRYPTONITE RADIATION FROM MY HOMEWORLD'S EXPLOSION... COULD TRAVEL ONLY AT LIGHT-SPEED. IT WOULD TAKE DECADES... FOR SUCH A SHOCKWAVE OF RADIATION TO REACH EARTH.
HOLY SMOKE ! AND THIS IS THE RADIATION THAT KNOCKED THE STUFFING OUT OF YOU ?
FROM WHAT I'VE CALCULATED... OF THE DISTANCES BETWEEN KRYPTON AND EARTH... IT'S THE ONLY POSSIBLE EXPLANATION.
JIM... I THINK I'D LIKE TO REST NOW.
GOTCHA.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING ?
SOMEWHAT... BETTER. STILL... VERY WEAK.
PERHAPS... IT WOULD BE BETTER... IF I LIE DOWN.
WOW... WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN TO BE POISONED BY YOUR OWN PLANET ?


SUPERMAN, THIS RADIATION SHOWER OR WHATEVER IT IS:--HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?
I'M... NOT CERTAIN. I KNOW NOTHING OF KRYPTON AFTER THE TIME I WAS SENT AWAY. IT COULD CONTINUE... INDEFINITELY.
YOU'LL HAVE TO GO... GET HELP!
SUPERMAN, I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU LIKE THIS.
JIM... LISTEN TO ME. I'VE MET OTHER ALIENS ON THIS WORLD... FRIENDS. THE MARTIAN MANHUNTER... THE GREEN LANTERNS... ONE OF THEM MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ME.
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT HERE FOR THE TIME BEING. PLEASE... GO!
HE WAS RIGHT, DARN IT. THERE WAS NOTHING MORE I COULD DO FOR HIM
OKAY, SUPERMAN, YOU'RE THE BOSS.
YOU HANG TOUGH--I WON'T BE GONE LONG.
I SWEAR!
I'LL FIND SOMEBODY... IF I HAVE TO, I'LL BRING BACK THE WHOLE DARNED JUSTICE LEAGUE!

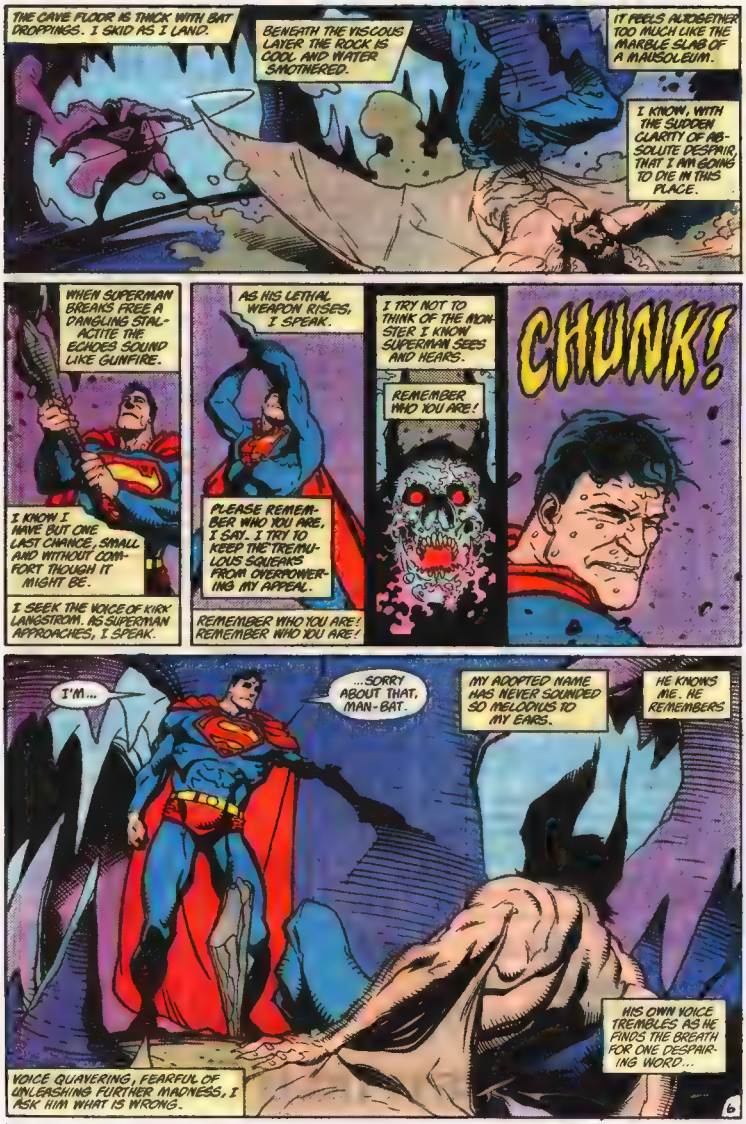

THE DARK WHERE MADNESS LIES
WRITTEN BY JOHN BYRNE
DRAWN BY MIKE MIGNOLA
LETTERED BY BILL OAKLEY
COLORED BY PETRA SCOTESE
IN THE DARK OF NIGHT, I FIND MY HOME.
WHEN THE WESTERN SKY HAS FADED THROUGH BLOOD RED TO INDIGO, AND STARS, LIKE PINPRICKS, IN THE DOME OF HEAVEN, SHINE THEIR TINY LIGHT INTO THE WORLD.
MY SKIN IS STROKED BY THE COOLING AIR.
THEN THE SKY IS MINE. MY EARS PEEK, SEARCHING FOR THE SHRILL SONGS OF MY BROTHERS
MY EYES SEE THE WORLD AS AN UNGUESSED TAPESTRY OF HIDDEN WONDERS.
I SEE THE OPENING OF THE CAVERN I SEEK; A BLACK, ROUND MOUTH IN THE GREEN FACE OF THE MOONLIT HILL.
I HAVE TRAVELLED HALFWAY ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO FIND THIS PLACE, ON THIS NIGHT. THE NIGHT OF GATHERING.
1

NOW MY HEART BEATS FASTER AS I FLY UNERRINGLY INTO THE PITCH BLACK TUNNEL IN THE EARTH. THE SILENCE WORRIES ME.
AGAIN MY QUESTING SENSES SEEK THE MELODIES OF THE NIGHT.
AND FIND INSTEAD, THE DISTANT SPLASH AND DRIP OF WATER ALONE ECHOING THROUGH THE LABYRINTHINE PASSAGES.
WHERE ARE MY NIGHTWING BROTHERS?
WHY IS THERE NAUGHT BUT ABSOLUTE STILLNESS AGAINST THESE ANCIENT, TIME-WORN WALLS?
AND THEN I SEE HIM.
CLOAKED IN INKY BLACKNESS, COWERING; HIS MIGHTY HEART POUNDING, AS IF WITH FEAR.
I GUESS, NOW, WHY MY BROTHERS ARE SO SILENT AND SO STILL. PIECES OF SHADOW, THEY CLING TO THE CEILING OF THE VAULT, FEARFUL OF THIS HUGE INTRUDER.
EVEN IN THE DARKNESS, THE COLORS OF HIS UNIFORM ARE BRIGHT.
EVEN IN THE DARKNESS MY EYES BEHOLD A HERO
BUT WHEN AT LAST HE TURNS HIS HEAD, AND LOOKS IN MY DIRECTION...
IT IS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT THAT MY ASPECT DOES NOT STIR IN HIM THE SAME REACTIONS I EXPERIENCE...
MONSTER...
MONSTER... COME TO... GET ME...
NO-OOO...
2

HIS VOICE IS LOUD IN MY EARS. LOUD AND HARSH. I HAVE NOT MET THIS MAN OF STEEL BEFORE. BUT STILL I WOULD NOT EXPECT FROM HIM THIS ODD REACTION.
I TRY TO SPEAK AS SOOTHINGLY AS MY OWN SHRILL VOICE WILL LET ME. I TELL HIM WHO I AM. KIRK LANGSTROM...THE MAN-BAT...
I SEE IMMEDIATELY MY WORDS ARE HAVING ANYTHING BUT THE DESIRED EFFECT.
IN HIS EYES I SEE REFLECTED THE TWISTED IMAGE OF MY VISAGE.
THE SAVAGE CARICATURE OF MY INHUMAN FACE...
AND WHEN HE MOVES AT LAST...
...HIS SMALLEST GESTURE IS AN AVALANCHE, AN EARTHQUAKE!
STAY BACK... MONSTER.
DON'T COME... ANY CLOSER.
I'LL... KILL YOU, IF I HAVE TO. I'LL KILL YOU!!
THE VERY AIR EXPLODES WITH WHIRLING SHARDS OF BROKEN STONE. THE FLAPPING OF A THOUSAND BATWINGS INTERMINGLES WITH THE AGONY OF THE ROCK.
I HEAR THE MADNESS IN HIS VOICE. THE DREADFUL TERROR IN HIS THUNDERING HEART.
BUT I HEAR MORE. A HESITANCE. A DEEP UNWILLINGNESS TO CARRY OUT HIS THREAT.
HE IS SUPERMAN. HE IS A HERO AND A CHAMPION. HIS REASON WILL PREVAIL, EVEN IN MADNESS. HE WILL NOT KILL.
3


OR SO I HOPE...
BUT THE ANIMAL SCREAM THAT BURSTS FROM HIS CONTORTED LIPS...
...AND SHAKES THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THESE HILLS..
...TELLS ME IN MOST FRIGHTENING TERMS...
...THAT SUPERMAN'S DELUSIONS ARE, IF ANYTHING, BECOMING WORSE!
HIS MOVEMENTS ARE CLUMSY...
UNSTEADY...
UNCERTAIN...
BUT STILL INHUMANLY FAST.
HE HAS A HANDFUL OF MY FLESH BEFORE I EVEN KNOW HE'S MOVED.
MY HIDE IS LIKE CURED LEATHER. TOUGH AND STRONG.
BUT THOUGH MY FLESH DOES NOT RIP IN HIS STEELY GRIP...
...THE SCREAM OF PAIN THAT TEARS FROM ME...
...SERVES ONLY TO PROMOTE HIS MADNESS.
IN AN INSTANT I AM FLYING AGAIN.
BUT IT IS NOT MY WINGS THAT CARRY ME.

SUPERMAN, MEANWHILE, CONTINUES IN HIS FEARFUL FANTASY.
HE FLAILS...
...AND ROCK AS OLD AS MAN ON EARTH SHATTERS LIKE MOST BRITTLE CRYSTAL.
ALL ROUND ME ARE MY BRETHREN OF THE NIGHT...
AND IN HIS EYES, AGAIN, I SEE WHAT TERROR THEIR SWIFT FLIGHT AND INK BLACK BODIES BREED IN SUPERMAN.
IN THE ECHOES THAT COME BACK TO ME I HEAR A BLEAK SUGGESTION OF HOW MY WORDS ARE REACHING SUPERMAN.
BUT STILL I TRY TO REACH THAT TINY CELL OF REASON I NOW PRAY IS LOCKED WITHIN HIS ABERRATION.
SOFTLY I SPEAK TO HIM. REMINDING HIM OF WHO AND WHAT HE IS. ASSURING HIM THERE IS NO NEED FOR FEAR.
I FORCE MY KEENING VOICE INTO THE MOST MELLIFLUOUS TONES IT CAN ACHIEVE...
AND ALL FOR NAUGHT.
HIS ANGUISH IS TOO DEEP. WHATEVER FEVER BOILS HIS BRAIN, IT CANNOT BE ASSUAGED WITH WORDS ALONE.
AND CIRCUMSTANCE COMPELS ME NOW TO FEED HIS MADNESS.
WHEN HE LEAPS TO ATTACK, I MUST FLY BACK, JUST AS AN ENEMY WOULD.
I MUST SEEK THE SCANT PROTECTION OF THE HIGH CEILING...
EVEN THOUGH SUCH FLIGHT AVAILS ME NOTHING!
5


THE CAVE FLOOR IS THICK WITH BAT DROPPINGS. I SKID AS I LAND.
BENEATH THE VISCOUS LAYER THE ROCK IS COOL AND WATER SMOTHERED.
IT FEELS ALTOGETHER TOO MUCH LIKE THE MARBLE SLAB OF A MAUSOLEUM.
I KNOW, WITH THE SUDDEN CLARITY OF ABSOLUTE DESPAIR, THAT I AM GOING TO DIE IN THIS PLACE.
WHEN SUPERMAN BREAKS FREE A DANGLING STALACTITE THE ECHOES SOUND LIKE GUNFIRE.
I KNOW I HAVE BUT ONE LAST CHANCE, SMALL AND WITHOUT COMFORT THOUGH IT MIGHT BE.
I SEEK THE VOICE OF KIRK LANGSTROM. AS SUPERMAN APPROACHES, I SPEAK.
AS HIS LETHAL WEAPON RISES, I SPEAK.
PLEASE REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE, I SAY. I TRY TO KEEP THE TREMULOUS SQUEAKS FROM OVERPOWERING MY APPEAL.
REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE! REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!
I TRY NOT TO THINK OF THE MONSTER I KNOW SUPERMAN SEES AND HEARS.
REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!
CHUNK!
I'M...
...SORRY ABOUT THAT, MAN-BAT.
MY ADOPTED NAME HAS NEVER SOUNDED SO MELODIOUS TO MY EARS.
HE KNOWS ME. HE REMEMBERS
HIS OWN VOICE TREMBLES AS HE FINDS THE BREATH FOR ONE DESPAIRING WORD...
VOICE QUAVERING, FEARFUL OF UNLEASHING FURTHER MADNESS, I ASK HIM WHAT IS WRONG.
6

KRYPTONITE
HIS MASSIVE BODY SLUMPS HE SEEMS TO SHRINK, TO FOLD IN ON HIMSELF, LIKE SOMETHING MORE OF PAPER THAN OF STEEL.
KRYPTONITE, I ASK. WHERE? IN THIS CAVE? TELL ME WHERE IT IS, AND I'LL REMOVE IT.
I KNOW, AS DOES THE WORLD, THE TERRIBLE BANE OF THOSE SMALL PIECES OF HIS LOST HOME WORLD.
IT'S NOT HERE.
NOT A PIECE OF IT.
IT'S EVERYWHERE. KRYPTONITE RADIATION. BATHING THE WHOLE WORLD. PENETRATING. ONLY LEAD CAN STOP IT.
I'D HOPED THESE CAVES WERE DEEP ENOUGH TO SHIELD ME. HAD JIMMY OLSEN BRING ME HERE, AFTER FIRST WAVE HIT
BUT I WAS WRONG. KRYPTONITE RADIATION...TOO POWERFUL. PENETRATED DIDN'T KILL ME, BUT MADE ME SICK. DELIRIOUS.
"YOU DON'T SOUND WELL, EVEN NOW," I CAUTION. HE WAVERS ON HIS FEET.
NO.
STILL WEAK SECOND WAVE OF RADIATION COULD FINISH ME.
GOT TO FIND THE SOURCE. HAVE ...THEORY.
BUT NEED...
HELP.
SPECIAL... HELP...
HE BARELY WHISPERS THE FINAL WORDS.
IT IS FORTUNATE INDEED THAT EARS AS KEEN AS MINE ARE THERE TO HEAR THE NAME HE SPEAKS.
MY FLYING BRETHREN JOIN ME IN A GREAT BLACK CLOUD AS I LAUNCH FORTH INTO THE STARRY NIGHT...
...TO SEEK ONE WHO, IN MANY WAYS, IS YET ANOTHER BROTHER.

A LITTLE... BIRD TOLD ME YOU NEED HELP, OLD FRIEND.
TO BE CONTINUED...
DON'T MISS SUPERMAN #19 FOR THE CONTINUATION OF OUR HALF CENTURY CELEBRATION, AS ARTIST MIKE MIGNOLA JOINS US FOR THE STARTLING SAGA WE HAD TO CALL...
SUPERMAN'S RETURN TO KRYPTON!

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
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L-3141

Dear Mike, John and Keith:

ACTION COMICS #596, "Hell is where the Heart is" is my favorite team-up so far. I love the Spectre, and seeing him with Superman is just about the best thing you guys have done so far. Only the Barda/Miracle team-up comes close to being as good as this. I like books which put a smile on my face and are not all sadness and depression.

The art is excellent in this ACTION. You could tell what everything was, even in the spirit scenes which, if handled by an inferior artist, might have been just some unrecognizable mish-mash. Thank you, John, for a realistic rendering of the pseudo-spirit Smallville.

Also thanks for the fill-in on the MILLENNIUM events. So far I have not seen any of the MILLENNIUM issues yet, but as soon as I can get to a comic shop I'm going to buy as many of the MILLENNIUM books as are available.

I loved the Halloween setting for the story and especially the Spectre scaring the little hooligans off from soaping Lana's windows. It seems Spec is everywhere preventing crimes great and small. I also loved Ma Kent remembering the Spectre from his J.S.A./ALL STAR days, not to mention his own solo career as a super-natural crime fighter. The end of the Manhunter was very fitting. He stole his victims humanity, so the Spectre destroyed him by removing his mechanicality. Excellent.

Superman is also a boyhood favorite. He does not seem to do much in this issue but, looks are very deceiving. In this story Superman is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for the people of Smallville, namely giving up his life. Let's face it, Superman is on Spectre turf, a super-natural plane where he could've been killed, even at his best. So for him to agree to go beyond the veil without any powers is a very brave thing for the Man of Tomorrow to do. Although I don't think the Man of Steel fully realized what having no powers would be like from his reaction when he was on the other side. Nevertheless he was fully willing to do anything to save his friends. So, Superman played a very subtle, heroic part in this tale, no less a vital part than the Spectre himself. Thanks John and Mike for the subtlety. It worked great. I hope not many other readers missed this.

I think that a comic guest-starring Captain Marvel would make for a great team-up tale. As would the Outsiders, Infinity Inc., Metamorpho (alone), Flash, J.L.I., Red Trinity (from the FLASH book), the Rocket Reds from G.L.C. and J.L.I. How about a Kilowog/Superman team-up in outer space?

Thanks for a great comic. Just a few issues till ACTION 600. Hope it doesn't get much colder 'cause I am camped out by the mail-box waiting for it. As well as Superman's team-up with Hal Jordan. Where the Heck is my Coleman heater. Why are my hands going numb and turning blue? Either I'm getting frost bite or I am a Manhunter. Remember Mike and John, Nobody escapes the Manhunters, and the Manhunters are a myth!

D.L. Lambert, Jr.
310 N. Walnut St.
Mechanicsville, IA 52306

Thanks for the team-up suggestions. As always, they are appreciated. The Spectre/little Hooligans scene was great, wasn't it ... sort of what we all wished desperately to see on Halloween, and at the same time hoped (with crossed fingers) that we never would. Funny how one little scene can bring back childhood night-dreams of actually facing what makes those bumps in the night. Evoking memories. Perhaps we have value after all ... (excuse me while I scrape some wax off this page).

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Byrne:

Regarding ACTION 596. Seeing the Spectre and Superman together was an unexpected team-up. The combination of the Spectre's magic and Superman's strength was extremely effective. The MILLENNIUM crossover put a whole new perspective on the boring little town of Smallville. The change was strangely refreshing.

Clark Kent growing up with a bunch of manhunters? Who would have believed it. Seeing the Spectre scaring would-be vandals added to the atmosphere of Halloween. We didn't know he had a sense of humor. All in all, it was a very enjoyable issue.

Your new super villains are the most original and extra-ordinary characters that have popped up in your comics. We would like to see more characters like Silver Banshee, Metallo, Bloodsport, and the new Mr. Mxyzptlk.

Some team-ups we would enjoy seeing are Superman and the following: Green Arrow, Dr. Fate, Firestorm, Captain Atom, Aquaman, Blue Devil, Guy Gardner, Bronze Tiger, Blue Beetle, Black Canary, GeoForce, Flash, Infinity, Inc., The Creeper, The Doom Patrol, Vigilante, Nightwing, Peacemaker, Swamp Thing, The Question, and another Dark Knight team-up.

Brian E. and Chad S.
P.O. Box 795
Colorado Springs, CO 80132

Yes, who would have believed it ... Manhunters of all things. That's two votes for the vandal/Spectre scene, by the way. And ya know, as much as I like that little bit, perhaps we should leave room for more varied letters at this point. Okay? Okay. Onward...

* * * * *

Dear Mike:

Finally! Some near-tragedy in Superman's life that he actually remembers afterwards! I don't mean to sound goulish, but Superman's team-up with the Spectre provided a much needed reminder for Clark about the great consequences of his actions. It was good to see Smallville again, even if the circumstances were decidedly somber. I can never see too much of the town which was the basis of Clark Kent's development. (It reminds me so much of the prairie towns where I grew up!) John's superb writing never fails to impress me! This is by far the most extensive weaving of the Manhunter mythos into the background of any DC character, and yet it is still possible to simply read this story as it stands on its own. Thank goodness the Spectre came along before the townspeople began to bury their dead! Though revealed to be misguided, the grief expressed by the people of Smallville was palatable, it WAS real. Please don't let the fact that the story ended happily cloud Clark's memory of the "blackest day" of his life. He needs this memory to remind him of the responsibilities inherent in his position.

The art this issue was really nice. I liked the way John drew the Spectre's form as fluid in its shape. The little touches such as Superman's hand passing through his cape and the elongated limbs were really appreciated. Tom Ziuko's colors were fabulous! He is by far my favorite colorist. And thank you for not painting the flash-back sequences all one color! I always feel cheated when I see an entire page of Byrne art painted an unvarying shade of pink. Bravo to Tom for taking the time to do it right (and well).

I'm eagerly awaiting ACTION 600. A team-up between John Bryne and George Perez is something I've been waiting for for a long time. (Actually,

that's a neat story idea right there. Just imagine the two of them romping through the DC Universe, wreaking havoc in their wake and just basically annoying continuity buffs ... Oh, right, it's already been done. Nevermind.) I have one request, however. If you do start a romance between Superman and Wonder Woman, please extend it beyond the pages of that one issue. An on-going relationship between these two would be very interesting.

Okay, here's my list of characters I'd like to see team-up with Superman: Aquaman, Nightwing, Raven Parish, Vixen, Doctor Light, Harbinger, Firehawk, and Ambush Bug. You may have noticed an over-abundance of females on this list. That's because I've noticed an under-abundance of females in this revamped DC Universe. The characters I've mentioned all have great potential that needs to be explored, and John Bryne would do a great job I'm sure. (Hey. Now that I'm thinking about it, why don't George Perez and Len Wein do a team-up book with Wonder Woman featuring all-female guest stars?) Other than Princess Diana and the ladies in the TEEN TITANS, there is a noticeable lack of strong female characters in DC's line-up. A prime example: The Justice League. Doctor Light gets shuffled off so fast I wouldn't have even noticed her if she hadn't been glowing so brightly, and the once-great heroine Black Canary has been regulated to the role of token female and furniture arranger. Please start concentrating on the wealth of great women heroes availability. And we're not talking universe-eating, nobel-prize-winning 14-year-old punk rockers here. We're talking real women. Give Wonder Woman and Black Canary some contemporaries.

Okay, enough said. Besides, I think I've gotten a major life-threatening splinter from my soapbox.

Ray Randell
140 Lockwood St.
Winnipeg
Manitoba, Canada

Try a little disinfectant, a good sharp needle, and an adhesive bandage. This injury of yours need not be life-threatening. Good letter, though. If you are a Wonder Woman fan, then you've probably picked up this very issue of ACTION already. Write and tell us what you think. And next time try one of those new-fangled plastic soapboxes.

*****

Dear Sirs:

This is my first letter to a comic book ever. I really enjoyed ACTION 596 guest starring the Spectre. The whole story was really great. But I think Superman should stop teaming with other heroes. Since ACTION 600 is coming up why don't you make it where Superman fights Clark Kent to the death. I think all the action should be about Superman's fights with his friends ... including Batman.

Chris Deese
866 Richmond St.
Macon, GA

Do you get along with YOUR friends, Chris?

*****

Dear John and Mike:

I am a recent DC convert. I started out when CRISIS first appeared. My best friend recommended it. I collected all the crossovers and have been collecting steadily ever since.

Even more recently, I bought ACTION 584 with the Teen Titans. I loved it. And I've been collecting ACTION, SUPERMAN and ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN ever since. I can't get enough. I enjoyed ACTION 596 with the Spectre, too. The plot, art, inking, coloring (and editing) were all perfect. I especially liked page 20 where the Spectre smiled after scaring those kids.

A few suggestions for future teamups: Wonder Woman (hopefully soon), Dr. Fate, Skyman, the Atom, Elongated Man, the Global Guardians (or at least some of them), Jericho, Batgirl, and The Question.

Thanks for listening and keep up the greatly, awesome, terrifically, stupendous, excellent, super, work.

Bartley J. Finn Jr.
331 Summit Ave.
West Seneca, NY 14224

I know. I said I wouldn't run another letter mentioning the Spectre Halloween scene, but how could I refuse a letter that uses so many wonderful, awesome, terrific, stupendous, excellent adjectives.

—Renee Witterstaetter

Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards for 1987

1. Favorite Editor, 2. Favorite Writer, 3. Favorite Penciller, 4. Favorite Inker, 5. Favorite Colorist 6. Favorite Letterer, 7. Favorite Cover Artist, 8. Favorite Comic-Book Story, 9. Favorite Comic Book, 10. Favorite Limited Comic-Book Series, 11. Favorite Original Graphic Novel, 12. Favorite Reprint Graphic Novel, 13. Favorite Character, 14. Favorite Publication about Comics, and Phil Seuling Award for Favorite Direct-Sale-Only Title.

Only material cover-dated 1987 is eligible for consideration. Votes for ineligible material will not be counted.

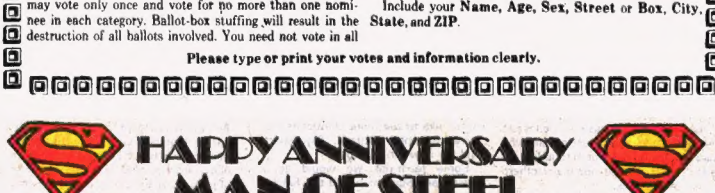
Anyone may copy and circulate this ballot, and any fan may vote only once and vote for no more than one nominee in each category. Ballot-box stuffing will result in the destruction of all ballots involved. You need not vote in all categories. *Comics Buyer's Guide* is not eligible for Category 13.

A free copy of *Comics Buyer's Guide* #752, dated April 15, 1988 (which will carry the results of voting), will be sent to any U.S. voter who does not already have a current or expired subscription to *CBG*. Votes from other countries will be counted, but we regret that a sample copy cannot be sent unless the vote is accompanied by $1.50 in U.S. funds to cover costs of handling and shipping to another country.

Mail your ballot individually in a single envelope by February 29, 1988, to: ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** Fan Awards, 700 East State Street, Iola, Wisconsin 54990.

Include your **Name, Age, Sex, Street** or **Box, City, State,** and **ZIP**.

Please type or print your votes and information clearly.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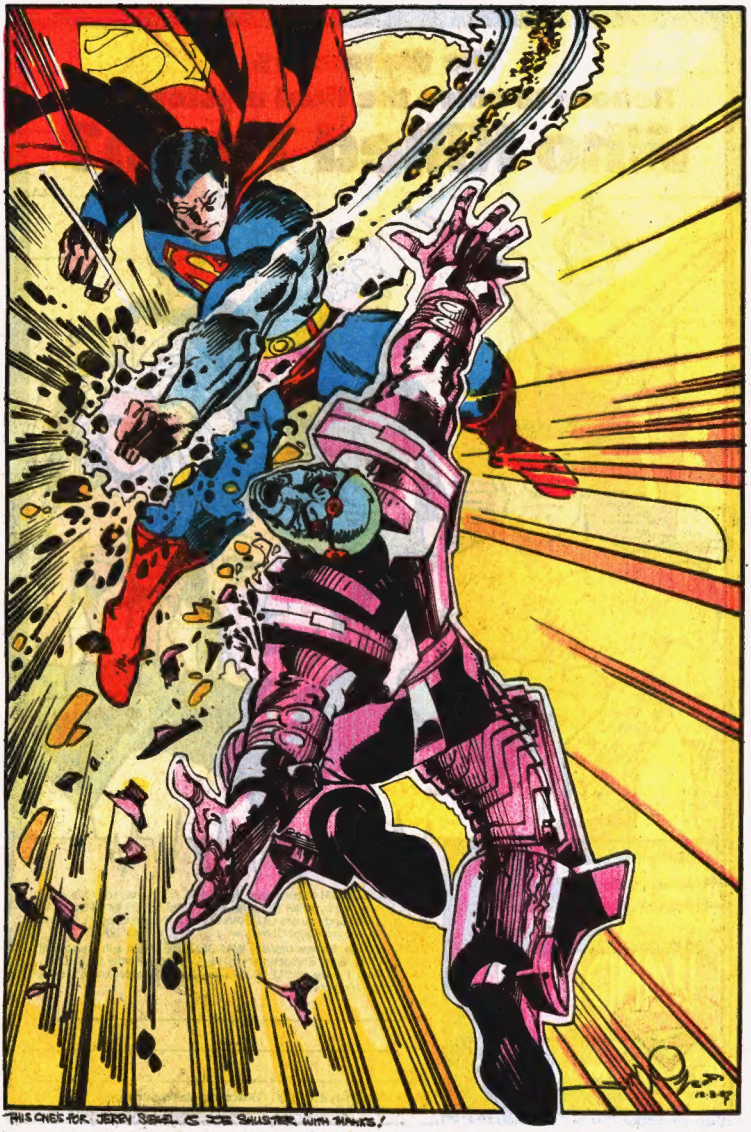
THIS ONE'S FOR JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER, WITH THANKS!